

HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

IN

THE CATCHING SECTOR

OF

THE BRITISH FISHING INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an historical examination of industrial relations in the catching sector of the British fishing industry during a period of structural change and decline. The review and analysis cover the emergence and development of both the trawler companies and the trade unions representing employees in the major fishing ports of Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull. Throughout the twentieth century, this sector of the industry has encountered growth, change and decline but the major characteristic of the employment relationship between employers and trawler-crews, namely casualism, has persisted, a condition of affairs which has been subjected to concerted criticism and challenge only in recent years. The thesis offers some tentative explanations of the events and issues discussed.

The theoretical perspective adopted by the author shaped the research methods of the study which incorporate documentary analysis, participant observation and interviews. Hypotheses are formulated concerning the conservatism of the employment relationship in the trawler companies, the ability of the trade unions to modify maritime labour practices and terms and conditions of employment of trawler crews, and the role of the state in these processes. Whilst the hypotheses appear to be confirmed, the conclusions are tentative and stress the need for further research.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

AF	Associated Fisheries Ltd.
AFS	Aberdeen Fishermen's Society.
AFVOA	Aberdeen Fishing Vessel Owners' Association.
ASECF	Amalgamated Society of East Coast Fishermen.
ASFVE & FU	Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessels Enginemen's and Firemen's Union.
ASFVOA	Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessel Owners' Association.
ASMA	Aberdeen Skippers' and Mates' Association.
BFF	British Fishing Federation.
BJIR	British Journal of Industrial Relations.
BJS	British Journal of Sociology.
BoT	Board of Trade.
BTF	British Trawler Federation.
BUT	British United Trawlers Ltd.
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy.
DAFS	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland.
DE	Department of Employment.
DoT	Department of Trade.
EEC	European Economic Community.
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zones.
EWO	Essential Work Order.
FERU	Fisheries Economics Research Unit.
FFVOA	Fleetwood Fishing Vessel Owners' Association.

GDTFPU	Granton and District Trawl-Fishermen's Protective Union.
GFOPS	Grimsby Federated Owners' Protection Society Ltd.
GFVOA	Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association.
GMWU	General and Municipal Workers' Union.
GSDFVE & FU	Grimsby Steam and Diesel Fishing Vessel Engineers' and Firemen's Union.
GSFVE & FU	Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessel Engineers' and Firemen's Union.
GSOA	Grimsby Smack-Owners' Association.
GTFPS	Grimsby Trawl Fishermen's Protection Society.
GTOG	Grimsby Trawler Officers' Guild.
GWGLU	Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union.
HASTE & FU	Humber Amalgamated Steam Trawler Engineers' and Firemen's Union.
HFIA	Hull Fishing Industry Association.
HFVOA	Hull Fishing Vessel Owners' Association.
HIB	Herring Industry Board.
HIDB	Highland and Islands Development Board.
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
HTOG	Hull Trawler Officers' Guild.
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Seas.
ILO	International Labour Organisation.
ILP	Independent Labour Party.
ITWF	International Transport Workers Federation.
IWC	International Whaling Commission.
JIC	Joint Industrial Council.

LFVOA	Lowestoft Fishing Vessels Owners' Association.
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.
MIN. & REC. OF GEN. EXEC. COUNC. and the F. & G.P. COMMITTEE:	Minutes and Record of the General Executive Council and the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the T & GWU.
MNB	Merchant Navy Board.
MRCS	Member of the Royal College of Surgeons.
MSC	Manpower Services Commission.
NAPE	National Association of Port Employers.
NAT	National Arbitration Tribunal.
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
n.d.	No date of publication.
NDLB	National Dock Labour Board.
NDLC	National Dock Labour Corporation.
NDLS	National Dock Labour Scheme.
NEAFC	North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission.
NFESKTS	National Federation of Enginemen, Stokers, and Kindred Trade Societies.
NFF	National Federation of Fishermen.
NFFF	National Federation of Fish Friers.
NFFO	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations.
NFLB	National Fishing Labour Board.
NJIC	National Joint Industrial Council.
NMB	National Maritime Board.
NMDSF	National Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen.
NSFU	National Sailors' and Firemen's Union.

NUBF	National Union of British Fishermen.
NUGMW	National Union of General and Municipal Workers.
NUS	National Union of Seamen.
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.
PHTFFPS	Port of Hull Trawl Fishermen's Friendly Protection Society.
PRO	Public Records Office.
RNMDSF	Royal National Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen.
SFF	Scottish Fishermen's Federation.
SFIA	Sea Fish Industry Authority.
SFO	Scottish Fishermen's Organisation.
SFTC	Sea Fisheries Training Council.
SIMA	Steel Industry Management Association.
SRO	Scottish Records Office.
SSFU	Scottish Sea Fishers' Union.
SSFVE & FU	Scottish Steam Fishing Vessels Enginemen's and Firemen's Union.
ST	Steam trawler.
STUC	Scottish Trade Union Congress.
TAC	Total Allowable Catches.
T & GWU	Transport and General Workers' Union.
TUC	Trades Union Congress.
UFU	United Fishermen's Union.
UK	United Kingdom.

UN United Nations.

USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

WFA White Fish Authority.

WFC White Fish Commission.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

AN OUTLINE INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD OF STUDY

I N T R O D U C T I O N

AN OUTLINE INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD OF STUDY¹

Among the problems facing both the coastal and landlocked nations of the world today is the need to manage the resources of the oceans in a globally equitable way. Exploitation of these resources is at present concentrated mainly on oil and fish and it is the social relationships in the United Kingdom surrounding the harvesting of the latter which form the subject of this research. Unlike the natural resource base of many other industries, such as oil and coal, fish is a replenishable resource if certain agreed procedures are observed. However, the unregulated, mechanised and highly competitive pursuit of numerous marine mammals and species of fish has resulted, not only in bitter international disputes, but in the near extinction of many species of whales and the severe depletion of such valuable fish stocks as the California sardines, the Northwest Pacific salmon, Barents Sea cod and the North Sea herring. There is thus an urgent need for nationally and internationally agreed procedures for fish conservation, fishing rights (who fishes where and when), and fish distribution (who gets what).

According to Friedman, a marine biologist, the depletion of the ocean's resources

".....is the result of lack of adequate, internationally agreed conservation measures, of the ruthless application of modern technology to an ancient occupation that did not and could not disturb the ecology of marine life as it was practised over the ages.as the world population swells at an exponential rate from the present

3.5 billion to what will be more than double that number by the end of the century, accompanied by progressive industrialization and mechanization of production, there will be a proportionate increase in the demand for the enormous food and₂ mineral resources contained in the oceans."²

It is a significant international problem, then, as Friedman argues, in that as the world population grows, more demands will be placed on the harvest of fish as a high protein - and much needed - food. It is a controversial international problem in that many commercially valuable species of fish are *inter alia*, migratory by nature which means they cross numerous national maritime boundary lines and hence their pursuit and harvest engender conflict amongst coastal nations.³

Similarly, we find conflict generated by these, or comparable, issues within national boundaries, that is to say between sectors of a domestic fishing industry. This form of domestic, social conflict is quite common between, for example, small boat owners and operators and large vessel owners in Britain and elsewhere. The fishing industry's trade press provides numerous examples of this indigenous hostility and conflict. For example:

".....a gulf is opening up between British fishermen over the EEC (European Economic Community) Common Fisheries Policy settlement being negotiated by Minister Peter Walker (Secretary of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food). The main area of dispute centres on special protected zones planned for the northern tip of Scotland and in the Irish Sea. Vessels over 80 ft. would be barred from these areas. The British Fishing Federation (a vessel owners' association) is strongly opposed to these zones which would exclude its large vessels while, at the same time, allowing small vessels to fish."⁴

Many important factors affect the development of a nation's fishing industry, including the role of the state and political administrations and, at the international level, the negotiations that are undertaken concerning such subjects as the question of access to a nation's fishing grounds for the fishing vessels of other nations, or the international regulations and institutions formed to administer the harvesting of certain species of fish or mammals.⁵ However, the subject of international relations *per se* is not the major focus of the research project, although it is clear that international fisheries agreements and regulations, and indeed fisheries disputes themselves, do of course have a significant bearing on the structure and operational activities of a domestic fishing fleet and onshore fishing industry.⁶ The real theme of the thesis is the catching sector of the British fishing industry and in particular the field of industrial relations throughout a period of structural change, growth and decline.

There are those employed in, or who comment upon, the British fishing industry, who believe that the industry is in decline:

"A threat that about 12 trawlers at Lowestoft could be laid up within the next few weeks unless something is done to safeguard fair prices for fish was issued on Saturday, [January 30th, 1981] This grim warning came from Neil Parkes, Chairman of Boston Deep Sea Fisheries, the President of the British Fishing Federation. It was "starkly apparent that the fishing port of Lowestoft could wither into insignificance unless prices for plaice improved dramatically in the near future. We are facing the prospect right now of laying up the entire fishing fleet in this port (Lowestoft) if things don't improve!"⁷

Numerous other grim prognostications have been sounded concerning other British fishing ports. For example, Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull, which form the empirical loci of this study, have, in recent years, suffered quite severely and are no longer major European fishing ports.⁸ Aberdeen has now been overtaken by Peterhead in terms of volume of landings of fish catches and their financial value.⁹ Hull, which was until quite recently one of the three major fishing ports in Western Europe, has experienced a major diminution in its fishing fleet resulting in a collapse in the numbers of sea-going jobs and jobs in ancillary work in onshore establishments. A Member of Parliament for a Hull constituency made the following observation in a Parliamentary Committee meeting:

"In Hull, to a lesser extent in Grimsby and to a large extent, I believe, in Fleetwood, we have seen the disappearance of many traditional fishing firms - of ship-repairers and food processors. The Findus factory in Hull is disappearing. Other factories are closing. Jobs and job opportunities are being lost in all the different industries associated with fishing. The loss amongst my union members has been considerable."¹⁰

The major objective of this thesis is to examine critically the role of the trade unions at a time of considerable structural change and instability within what are called the distant-water and middle-water trawler fleets, owned and operated, in the main, by British trawler companies. This once-important element of the catching sector of the British fishing industry has experienced substantial structural change and decline.¹¹ Employment and trade

union membership amongst fishermen have both declined (see Figure 9 , page 488 , Numbers of Regularly Employed Fishermen at Selected British Fishing Ports). Whether or not the British fishing industry is in decline, it is clear that irrevocable changes have occurred which have drastically affected trade union and employee power to influence the changes in their relationship with their employers.¹²

Whilst the economic recession has been a causal factor, the recent structural changes experienced by the catching sector of the British fishing industry are mainly the direct consequence of the decisions taken by the governments of North Atlantic coastal nations to control more drastically and rigorously access to their contiguous fishing grounds.¹³ There are, of course, other factors, for example the obligations surrounding membership of the EEC, that have had an important bearing on the difficulties being experienced by the domestic industry all of which will be discussed in this study.¹⁴

Throughout the twentieth century the fishing industry has experienced changing economic circumstances and technological change but the major defining characteristic of the employment relationship between trawler crews and their employers of casualism has survived (fishermen were - and are - employed for one voyage at a time for which they sign ship's articles and these may, depending upon the type of vessel, its fishing gear, and grounds to be fished, be of one week's duration or upwards of ten weeks). This means, *inter alia*, that they are denied the protection of a wide area of employment legislation, e.g. the Redundancy Payments

Act, 1965, and its subsequent amendment).¹⁵ In the nineteen-seventies this casual form of employment was subjected to sustained criticism and challenge by the trade union representing the fishermen, in an attempt to replace casualism with a system of employment based upon the National Dock Labour Board scheme (Appendix 10, 'An Employment Scheme for Fishermen' p. 631). Under this scheme, the fishermen would be given security of employment in terms of a system of registration similar to that obtaining in the docks industry which would be jointly supervised by a national fishing labour board composed of employers' and employees' representatives. This board in conjunction with local labour boards in the ports would determine the terms and conditions of all registered fishermen employed by registered trawler companies.

Chapter One of this thesis involves a critical review of literature on the British fishing industry, Chapter Two continues this examination including the social relationships between employees and trawler companies. A theoretical perspective is formulated and its methodological implications and problems are then discussed. The major part of Chapter Two deals with the presentation of this alternative perspective, research ideas, research strategies and the empirical research methods employed in this investigative study. Chapter Three contains an historical account of technological change in the fishing industry and of the inception and development of the company-owned steam trawler

fleets in the major fishing ports of Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull,¹⁶ while Chapter Four focusses upon changing patterns of ownership and control in this sector of the industry. Chapter Five examines the emergence of trade unionism amongst fishermen in the Humber ports. Contained within this examination, is an account of trade unionist attitudes to the apprenticeship system and a discussion of the industrial disputes which were generated by the introduction of winter fleetings. In Chapter Six the author presents a critical description of the development of trade unions in the major British fishing ports. Here attention is focussed upon the formation and consolidation of the trawler engineers' trade unions in Aberdeen and Grimsby, their relationships with employers, employers' associations and those associations and trade unions which represented skippers, mates, deckhands and cooks.

In Chapter Seven and Chapter Eight the analysis is continued of trade union attempts in more recent times to change the employment relationship between trawler crews and their employers. A critical assessment is made of the influence of external factors on both the structure of this sector of the industry and its form of industrial relations. Included here is the part played by maritime labour legislation and, in addition, contemporary developments within the docks industry and maritime transport are discussed. The discussion in Chapter Nine centres upon

the efforts made by the Transport and General Workers' Union in the nineteen seventies to restructure employment relations and practices in the catching sector. The author's analysis of power and compliance within the fishing industry and the implications of this particular study for theory and research in the field of industrial relations form part of Chapter Ten, which is the concluding chapter of the work. Also, some tentative predictions and recommendations are offered concerning the possible future developments of a re-structured industry within the European Economic Community. It is the author's view that the UK will retain membership of the EEC for some years to come and even if membership were to be relinquished that would not necessarily mean an end to international and domestic fisheries disputes.¹⁷ This thesis has been partly written during the "Year of the Fisherman", which commemorates the centenary year (1981) of the Royal National Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen.¹⁸

REFERENCES

1. Quotations and references are designated, as far as it is possible, by citing the author/s, title of work, publishers, place and date of publication and, in addition, page numbers are cited. All the publications consulted by the researcher are to be found in the bibliography.
2. W. Friedman, *'The Future of the Oceans'*, Dobson Books, London, 1972, pp.27-28.
3. An example of this form of conflict between fishing nations was the prolonged United Kingdom-Icelandic fisheries dispute, popularly known in the United Kingdom as the 'Cod War'. Further and more detailed reference to the international fisheries dispute will be made later but it can be noted here that fisheries disputes throughout the world's oceans have a long history. For example, the North American tuna fishing fleet was involved in a protracted and frequently violent fisheries dispute with the nations of Chile; Ecuador and Peru, a dispute known popularly in America as the "Wet War". See J. Wiegand-Shuttleworth, "Seizures of United States Fishing Vessels : The Status of the Wet War", San Diego Law Review, Vol. 6, 1969.
4. *Fishing News*, January 30th, 1981.
5. An example of this kind of international organisation is the International Whaling Commission, established in 1946, which seeks to regulate (not very effectively) the commercial whaling operations throughout the world's oceans. There are numerous other international maritime organisations which have a more direct bearing on the fishing industry.
6. See J. Dyson, *'Business in Great Waters'*, Angus and Robertson, London, 1977, pp.292-311.
7. *Fishing News*, January 30th, 1981.
8. *Fifth Report from the House of Commons Expenditure Committee's Sub-Committee on Trade and Industry on the Fishing Industry*, HMSO, London, 1978.
9. *Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistical Tables 1980*, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland, HMSO, Edinburgh 1981.

10. K. McNamara (M.P. for Kingston Upon Hull Central), *Standing Committee, Fisheries Bill, First Sitting, Tuesday, 20 January, 1981, Parliamentary Debates, HMSO, London, 1981*, (McNamara is a Transport & General Workers' Union-sponsored M.P.)
11. J. Nicolson, *'Food from the Sea'*, Cassell, London, 1979, pp. 187-197.
12. This emphasis on the powerlessness of one of the largest trade unions in Western Europe contrasts with the popular stereotype of trade union power; see Chapter Two.
13. C.C. Hood, *'British Fishing and the Iceland Saga'*, *Political Quarterly*, Vol.44, 1973, pp. 349-352.
14. N.A. Godman, *'The Scottish Fishing Industry in a European Framework'*, *Scottish Trade Union Review*, No.12, Spring 1981, pp. 14-17.
15. B.W. Napier, *'Individual Employment Law in the British Fishing Industry'*, *The Juridical Review*, Edinburgh, Vol.21, 19, pp. 189-209.
16. The reasons for choosing these three ports are dealt with in Chapter Two.
17. For example, should the Labour party win the next general election and withdraw from the EEC, disputes could arise over the access by EEC fishing vessels to UK fishing grounds.
18. S. Pritchard provides an interesting, if somewhat panegyrical, account of the work of this organisation in his book, *'Fish and Ships'*, Mowbray, London, 1980. For a somewhat more critical and contemporary view of the then NMDS, see the discussion in Chapter Six. pp. 296-297.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

AN OUTLINE INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD OF STUDY¹

Among the problems facing both the coastal and landlocked nations of the world today is the need to manage the resources of the oceans in a globally equitable way. Exploitation of these resources is at present concentrated mainly on oil and fish and it is the social relationships in the United Kingdom surrounding the harvesting of the latter which form the subject of this research. Unlike the natural resource base of many other industries, such as oil and coal, fish is a replenishable resource if certain agreed procedures are observed. However, the unregulated, mechanised and highly competitive pursuit of numerous marine mammals and species of fish has resulted, not only in bitter international disputes, but in the near extinction of many species of whales and the severe depletion of such valuable fish stocks as the California sardines, the Northwest Pacific salmon, Barents Sea cod and the North Sea herring. There is thus an urgent need for nationally and internationally agreed procedures for fish conservation, fishing rights (who fishes where and when), and fish distribution (who gets what).

According to Friedman, a marine biologist, the depletion of the ocean's resources:

".....is the result of lack of adequate, internationally agreed conservation measures, of the ruthless application of modern technology to an ancient occupation that did not and could not disturb the ecology of marine life as it was practised over the ages.as the world population swells at an exponential rate from the present

CHAPTER 1

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE BRITISH FISHING INDUSTRY

C H A P T E R 1

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE
BRITISH FISHING INDUSTRY1.1 Introductory Comments on the Present Circumstances
Surrounding the British Fishing Industry

The literature on the catching sector of the British fishing industry is copious but the intention is to conduct a selective review of typical contributions over the years by popular writers, historians, scientists and social scientists in order to illustrate the occupation, way of life, and general culture of the fishermen, including facts and mythologies which influence prevailing attitudes towards the industry and those who work in it. The review, which spans the first two chapters should lend perspective to the analysis of contemporary issues.¹

In recent years the British fishing industry has suffered from a concourse of economic, political, technological and biological problems that have had a major influence on its structure and operations. Some sectors, in particular the traditionally named distant-water trawler fleet and some onshore industrial organisations, have undergone considerable and seemingly irreversible structural change and decline. This condition of affairs has been brought about *inter alia* by the extension of coastal-state control over adjacent fishing grounds in the North-East Atlantic; improvements in fishing-gear technology which has led to the over-capacity of catching power;² the widespread depletion of commercially valuable fish stocks; international and national fisheries disputes; conflict among EEC member-states

anent the redrafting of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP); the protracted, and sometimes fruitless, negotiations between the EEC and North Atlantic coastal states concerning reciprocal fishing agreements; large-scale and rapid increases in operational costs (particularly the sharply-rising cost of fuel and gear); and the frailty of quayside prices for the fish harvested by British fishing vessels.³

Some of these changes materialised during the last decade, although it is important to remember that most if not all have significant historical antecedents.⁴ Some appreciation of the changing circumstances of the fishing industry and the trawler companies can be gained by comparing and contrasting the statements (the first in 1966 and the second in 1977) in the annual reports of two chairmen of the White Fish Authority (WFA):⁵

"The chief feature of the Authority's work in the past year has been our growing pre-occupation with assurance of future supplies. The most striking example of the safeguards we are encouraging is the continued rapid growth in the practice of freezing the catch at sea, a development in which the Authority played an important part from the earliest stages and which it has since supported by devoting a substantial proportion of Exchequer grant monies towards freezer-trawlers. By the time this Report is published there should, in consequence of the enterprise of owners, be seventeen freezer-trawlers in operation, with a dozen more in prospect, and the fish that they produce is now making a significant contribution to the British market. The range of these vessels and their ability to stay at sea until their holds are filled will go far to offset falling supplies from some traditional grounds. It is encouraging to find that early experience has so far confirmed our hope that freezer-trawlers are likely to operate in distant-waters more profitably than wet fishers."⁶

The later report comments:

".....it seemed reasonable to look forward to exchange arrangements with countries in whose waters we had traditionally fished so that an orderly and relatively painless reduction of the fleet could be facilitated. In the event almost two-fifths of the distant-water fleet, which still numbered 163 vessels at the end of 1974, disappeared from service in the course of two years. Most of the withdrawn vessels were heavy oil-burners which could not survive long in an era of expensive fuel, but not all of them were, and meanwhile the survivors are increasingly jostling each other for an adequate share of inadequate resources. This situation has come about with the refusal of Iceland to renew the agreement for limited British fishing which expired at the end of November, (1976) and its subsequent stubborn refusal to negotiate effectively with either Britain or subsequently with the Commission of the EEC. Only the Commission can now negotiate on behalf of Community countries."⁷

Some of the economic, political, technological and biological factors already mentioned, e.g. the extension of catching power and the drastic depletion of commercially-valuable stocks were important variables in the protracted fisheries disputes between Iceland and the United Kingdom, which were finally resolved by the two governments in Iceland's favour in 1976.⁸ Whilst the subsequent exclusion of British trawlers from their traditional, and once-rich, Icelandic fishing grounds was of less immediate significance to the Scottish fishing industry than to the major English fishing ports of Fleetwood, Grimsby and Hull, it had nonetheless serious implications for the whole British fishing industry. Moreover, fear of the consequences of over-fishing encouraged the Faroese Government to follow Iceland's example in drastically reducing foreign fishing operations in its waters, a decision which had an immediate and important

effect on the activities of sections of the Aberdeen fleet.⁹

Similarly, other littoral nations, e.g. Canada, Norway, the U.S.A., and the U.S.S.R., have severely constrained the fishing operations of foreign trawlers around their respective coastlines. The map on page 7 of former traditional British fishing grounds shows how large these once were. Superimposed on this map (which was published in 1938) are the present British territorial waters (extended by an Act of Parliament in 1976), to which the major proportion of the British fishing fleet is mainly now confined and from which many foreign fishing vessels have been banned.¹⁰ Fishing vessels from EEC member-states, however, are granted regulated access to these areas.

Recent increases in operational costs and the loss of the traditional distant-water fishing grounds around Iceland and elsewhere have been only partly mitigated by the exclusion of fishing vessels of third countries from the waters of EEC coastal states.¹¹ This means, *inter alia*, that vessels owned and operated by persons or companies in the EEC member-states can fish for species traditionally caught by vessels from other countries, e.g. Spain, U.S.S.R. and Poland.¹² There is at the same time a growing awareness of the advantage to be gained in catching other, less valuable, species, e.g. blue whiting and horse mackerel.¹³

There appears to be, however, widespread resentment, amongst inshore fishermen, against the incursion of larger trawlers into their traditional fishing grounds:

"Prior to 1976 most of the mackerel catches in the country were taken by south-west owned boats. With the arrival firstly of Scottish and Northern Irish trawlers, then others from Hull, Fleetwood and Lowestoft, followed by pursers and freezer trawlers, the share taken by local boats naturally fell. Unfortunately their catches also declined. Last season will be remembered in Cornwall particularly, and to some degree in Devon, as the period in which they lost the mackerel - the very fishery they created. There is no south-west purser fleet. The local trawlers are generally smaller, less powerful and older than visiting ones, and have found they cannot compete."¹⁴

This hostile reaction to the activities of the large trawlers and other technologically advanced fishing vessels, e.g. the purse seiner, has a long history in the North Atlantic fishing nations.¹⁵ In Britain the conflict between the various elements of the catching sector has intensified in recent years:

"The rapid decline of the trawler fleets operating from Hull, Grimsby, Fleetwood and Aberdeen has continued throughout the year under review. More recently, the agreement reached with Iceland has signalled a further abrupt and very severe reduction of British distant-water fishing. Thus, the economic climate of the past two years and the Icelandic dispute have together had the effect of telescoping into a short space of time developments which might in other circumstances have been spread less painfully over a larger period while an orderly transition to 200-miles fishing limits was taking place."¹⁶

One can add to these abruptly changing circumstances the paradox that Scotland, for example:

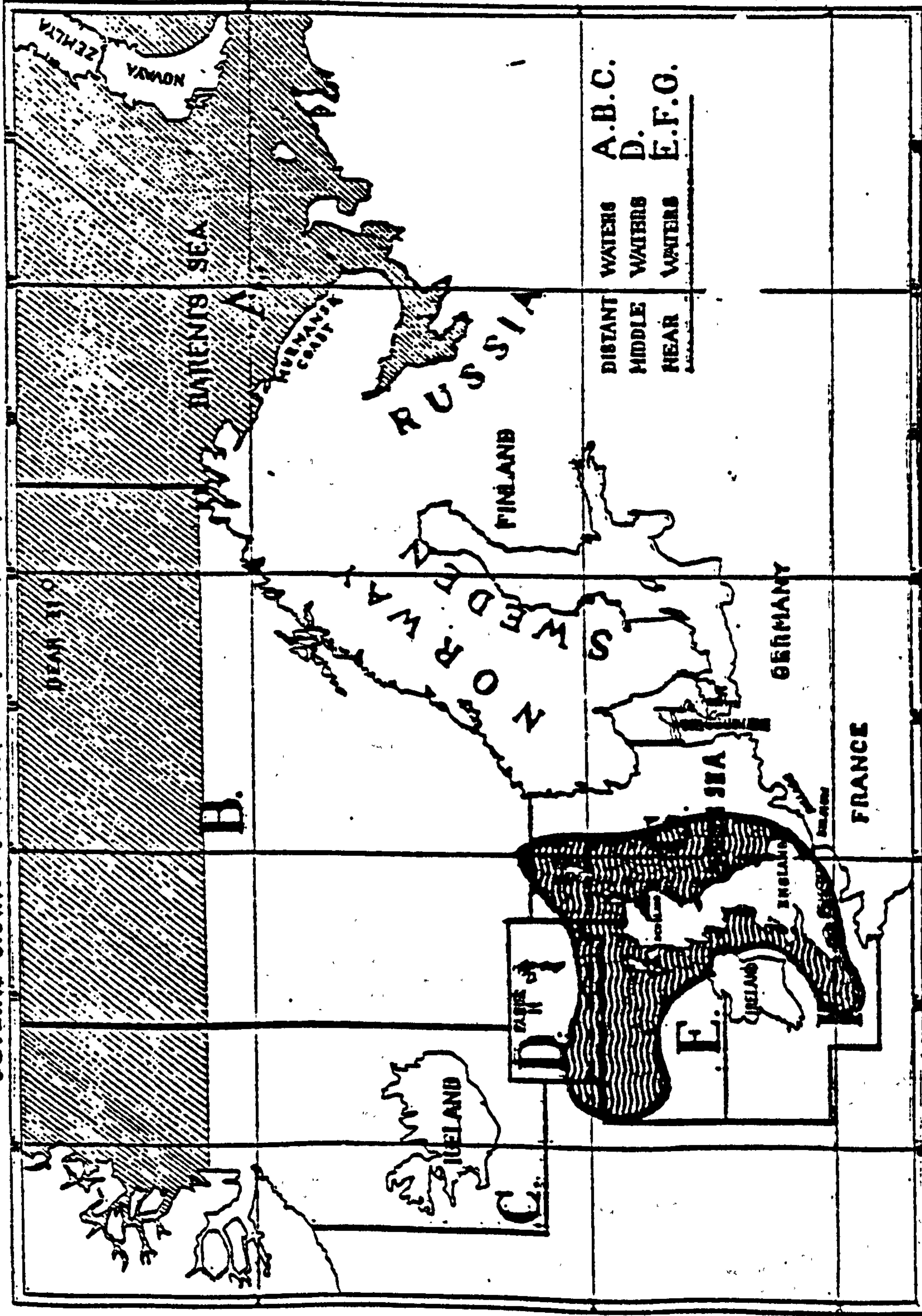
".....is almost surrounded, except along her short border with England, by seas which are among the most prolific fishing areas of the world. Around her coasts for a considerable distance offshore stretch waters of no more than moderate depth - less than 100 fathoms - and in them thrive the species adapted to cool water conditions of less than 200 fathoms; particularly important in such conditions are cod and haddock."¹⁷

The industry, whilst not exempt from the contemporary economic crisis, is faced with special problems of its own and has throughout the twentieth century experienced both recurring crises and structural change.¹⁸ However, the main characteristic of casual employment within trawler companies has persisted and it is only in recent years that it has been seriously challenged by the trade unions representing trawler crews.¹⁹ Trawler company employees - both manual and non-manual - working in onshore establishments have employment relationships which are much more similar to those of employees in other industries than to those of the fishermen who are their fellow-employees.

One of the objects of this study is to explain this employment relationship in terms of a theory of power and compliance and to demystify the widespread and uncritical perception of these fishermen as "hunters" or "co-adventurers".²⁰ This perception of the fishermen, as we shall explain, has been reinforced by some of the literature on the industry. It is thus within a setting of rapidly changing economic and political circumstances, both nationally and internationally that the writer has undertaken his examination of trade union attempts to end casualism in the employment of fishermen in the British trawler companies.²¹

MAP 1

Traditional British Fishing Grounds with Superimposition of the United Kingdom's
OUTLINE CHART SHOWING THE PRINCIPAL FISHING REGIONS Current Fishing Limits.



Source: Second Report of the Sea Fish Commission for the United Kingdom, HMSO, Cmd.5130, 1938, Appendix III, p.114.

MAP 2

BRITISH FISHING PORTS



1.2 Survey of the Literature on the Catching Sector of the Industry.

An American doctoral candidate stated in the preface to his thesis on the American Atlantic commercial fisheries:

"This dissertation represents the author's first large scale effort to expand interest and research into the sociology of commercial fisheries. The area is, to say the least, under-exploited by social scientists. By focussing upon microscopic and macroscopic factors in the structure of commercial fishery systems along the Atlantic Coast of the United States, the author hopes to make a modest contribution to the understanding of the operation of these productive organisations."²²

A perusal of the literature indicates that here in Great Britain there has been a similar sparseness of social scientific interest in the fishing industry.²³ Also, it appears that much of the literature on the catching sector of the fishing industry suffers from various deficiencies. From the researcher's perspective, one of the most important problems with the literature is that it substitutes romanticism for sceptical and methodical analysis of the occupation of fishermen, fishing communities and the fishing industry.²⁴

A typical example is provided by J.G. Bertram's description of a Scottish fishing community in the second half of the nineteenth century:

"The daily routine of fisher-life at Auchmithie is simple and unvarying; year by year, and all the year round it changes only from one branch of the fishing to another. The season, of course, brings about its joys and sorrows; sad deaths, which overshadow the village with gloom; or marriages, when the people may venture to hold some simple fete, but only to send them back with renewed vigour to their

occupations. Time, as it sweeps over them, only indicates a period when the deep-sea hand-lines must be laid aside for the herring-drift, or when the men must take a toilsome journey in search of bait....." ²⁵

Such a view may well have been largely true of fishing villages in Scotland and England in the nineteenth century but it does not provide us with any insight concerning the attitudes of the fishermen and their families to their way of life, or the social relationships within village communities, e.g. between those who actually owned the fishing vessels and those who sailed in them, nor does it throw light on the social and economic changes brought about by the expansion of the industry at that time. Fishing itself is merely seen as a form of human activity that is imbued, in some abstract way, with a mystical 'nature' which appears to be all-pervasive.²⁶ Further, fishermen are perceived in terms of strange personality types, e.g. 'hunters', 'individuals' or even 'wild men', all within a social vacuum.²⁷

There is a long history to this emphasis in the literature on the social isolation of the fishermen and they are almost always given personality traits and characteristics of temperament and character, attitudes and perspectives that, it seems to the writer, place them apart from other social and occupational groups.²⁸

It is the writer's intention to examine this failure of the literature to penetrate the working life of the fishermen.²⁹

A surgeon, who possessed a Board of Trade Certificate of Competency as Master Mariner and was a member of the, then, Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen, had the following to say about the fishermen he had known in the last two decades of the nineteenth century:

"For over twenty years I have lived among the deep-sea fishermen on both sides of the Atlantic, and I can safely challenge any man to say that they are unworthy representatives of an ancestry we love to boast of. The same courage, even unto death, I have seen exhibited again and again, and that where no other spur to action existed than the imperious conscience of a brave sailor. No reward was looked for, no mead of praise obtained. Yet I have seen men go to save a human life, where heroes might have feared to follow; for more than once it meant passing, alone and unobserved, into the valley of the Shadow of Death." 30

Of the death of a fisherman, Grenfell wrote:

"It was useless even to look for him in the darkness, and so the mate had nothing to do but take the vessel home, the flag half-mast. Worse than all else, he had to go and tell Annie that Tom - her brave, gentle Tom - had gone out into eternity - DRUNK." 31

Another author, a naval architect by profession, in his book on late nineteenth century sailing trawlers commented thus:

"Naturally life on board the old sailing smacks varied considerably, some writers have stressed the squalid side, the verminous cabins, uncouth men and sordid life. Such undoubtedly was the case in certain instances, just as slums are found in beautiful cities, but one would have to go a long way to find a finer type than the average smacksman, who at his best was a splendid seaman, taking a pride in his craft and calling. Granted, as the world today calls 'education' many were illiterate and unable to read or write, but that does

form character and to my mind better such a man whose word was his bond than some of the slick individuals masquerading in various walks of life today, who have misused years of free education and advantages undreamed of in the days of which I write."³²

In addition to observing these differences between fishermen and shore-based workers, March marks out a distinction between the more deserving, more ambitious fishermen and the less deserving and less ambitious in the late nineteenth century:

"Few indeed were the inducements for a man to choose such a life, yet great were the possibilities for a youth to become a skipper at an age when lads ashore were just out of their apprenticeship. Then to realize another ambition and become part-owner, with every possibility of having a fleet within a few years even retiring from the sea to conduct the business ashore. Could any mill hand or cotton operative see a similar reward for his labours, and how many agricultural workers could aspire to own a farm? Thus there were compensations for the hard life for those lucky ones on whom fate smiled, for the remainder, if the hurrying waters did not claim their toll, there might be little to show for toil and hardship." ³³

This quotation provides the reader with another example of the colourful and somewhat uncritical approach to the position of the fishermen, and also illustrates the gap between appearance and reality where ownership of fishing vessels in the late nineteenth century is concerned.

S. Walpole in 1884 estimated that a new sailing trawler completely fitted out for sea cost approximately one thousand pounds.³⁴ March himself supplies documentary evidence in confirmation of Walpole's contemporary estimate.

"In the following year (1884) *Othello* built for C. Hellyer, cost £947 14s. 0d. ...²⁸The fine trawler *Rosalind* measured 93²⁸/100 tons on dimensions 80.6 (ft.) by 20.65 by 10.65, length of keel 71 ft., and cost £934 11s 6d., being classified 12 years A1 at Lloyds."³⁵

It is doubtful whether vessel ownership was acquired quite so readily as March suggests in his book. Whilst it was feasible for some trawler skippers to acquire a vessel by way of a mortgage and loans, or in partnership, opportunities of satisfying the aspirations of vessel ownership were in the main restricted to relatively few people. The historian J. Rule observed:

"Of 353 fishing smacks at Hull in 1877, 93 were singly owned. On the maximum assumption that all these single owners were working skippers, and on the basis of the usual crew size of five, it can be estimated that 1672 smacksmen out of 1765 had no share in boat ownership. In fact the trawling industry was dominated by the big fleets."³⁶

Numerous authors in the nineteenth century and the present century have sought to speak well of the fishermen as people and employees in contrast to those who are perceived as less worthy. For example, F.G. Aflalo, a zoologist, who conducted a survey of the English and Welsh fishing ports at the turn of the century, expressed the view:

"From the skipper to the ship's boy, they all carry their life in their hands; and that life reckoned by its comfort, is worth very little. They get no sympathy, for the seaside-going public judges them by the longshore imitations, who profit by its credulity and whine for alms. Until the authorities at our watering-places treat these unredeemed loafers on the same basis as other mendicants, it will never be generally recognised that the real fishermen do not come in contact with the tourist, nor,

if they did, would they ask for money. Theirs are the strenuous life and the mean reward."³⁷

Another author, P. Anson, who wrote several books on the subject of commercial fishing in the first half of the twentieth century, devoted one page of a book published in 1932, to the social conditions of the trawler crews employed by the trawler companies. Anson was of this opinion:

"There is not the same *esprit de corps*, or love or pride in the ship, or in the interest in the work as one finds among the crews of the Scottish herring-drifters. The ambition of most skippers and mates is to retire from the sea as soon as they can afford to do so. But few have any idea of thrift. They live recklessly when they are earning 'good money'. The life of a trawlerman is not an enviable one from any point of view."³⁸

Anson appears to draw an impressionistic maritime element into the rural community - large, industrial city debate. He seems to have more sympathy with the operators and crews of fishing vessels sailing from small fishing villages than with owners and crews of the larger steam-trawlers operating out of the major fishing ports such as Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull:

"One of the great evils of the present-day conditions of the trawling industry is that neither skippers nor crews have the old personal interest in, or love for, their ship. She is to them little more than a sort of money-making machine. When the companies grow so big as they are now you come against some of the worst evils of modern industrialism."³⁹

Employers and crews would appear to be lumped together, by Anson, in this partisan condemnation of what seems, to him, to be a somewhat regrettable development in the history of the fishing industry.⁴⁰ Anson chooses to ignore the dissatisfaction of sailing-trawler crews in the late nineteenth century with their conditions of employment and living conditions whilst at sea.⁴¹

Another author, J.B. Priestley, in his book '*English Journey*' which was published in 1934, refers to a conversation he had on the fish dock in Hull:

"I had a talk with one of the trawler-owners who told me among other things that the trawler crews were still a race apart, perhaps the last of the wild men in this tame island of ours, fellows capable of working day and night, and then also capable of going on the booze with equal energy and enthusiasm. They are intensely loyal to their skippers, he told me, but do not give a damn for anybody or anything else."⁴²

One ought not, perhaps, to expect a disinterested observation of fishermen from one who was so closely involved with them as a trawler-company owner.

This romantic and biased approach to the fishermen, their occupation and working conditions has, to all intents and purposes, persisted through to the present day or, at the very least, to the most recent past. In his book '*The Deep Sea Fishermen*' published in 1970, A. Villiers states:

"So it went, voyage after voyage, year after year. So it always had gone, for these Arctic trawlermen were deep-sea fishermen borne-off to sea at 15 in trawlers out of Hull, or Grimsby, or wherever it was their fathers and their uncles had gone before them, under far worse conditions. (Except for the weather on the Arctic banks. That showed no change.) Many aboard had some relative beneath the sea - not that they allowed their minds to dwell on this sort of thing. They accepted it as they and their forebears always had; accepted it and forgot it with that fatalistic optimism of the seaman and the fighting man. Death is for others, not Him! So, accepting the absence of thought on such a grim subject, he can go cheerfully on."43

Apart from its emotive style and somewhat distorted view of the fishermen and their working conditions on board company-owned trawlers, Villiers' book, *inter alia*, ignores the substantial volume of evidence to the effect that these stoical fishermen and their forebears often made the decision that this work was for others and not themselves. Commenting on the working conditions of fishermen of the two Humber ports in the late nineteenth century Rule observes:

"So strongly did many of them hate the life of a deep-sea fisherman, with the all-too-prevalent ill-treatment which they received at sea, that without the sanction of imprisonment for desertion, few trawlers would have sailed fully crewed from the Humber ports."44

Rule's observation can be contrasted with the view Dyson expressed anent the fatalism of the fishermen and the acceptance, within the industry of what may be termed dangerous occupational behaviour. Dyson wrote in 1977:

"A fisherman works constantly in conditions of appalling hazard. He stares death in the face in a way that most of us can barely conceive and knows that before long he will once again be in a situation of mortal fear. It is perhaps this that gives the fisherman a look about him that seems to say that he considers other people to be only half alive. A fisherman is a hunter, and the simple truth of fishing is that unless he ventures from the safety of a harbour.....he won't catch any fish. In fact, fishing is probably the only branch of sea-going in which recklessness is not only permissible, but is an essential ingredient of success."⁴⁵

Implicit in this perspective is an acceptance of a condition of affairs in which, seemingly, the lives of fishermen are in a coldly calculated way put at risk by both their skippers and their employers. The dangers faced by the fishermen and the question of safety regulations, are too important to be treated in summary fashion, and are discussed more fully in later chapters of this thesis. However, the quotation does provide the reader with attitudes that reflect the social relationships between employers, skippers and crews of fishing vessels. Dyson's view is not so very different from that of others who have published books and articles on the industry.

If we turn to articles on the fishing industry which have been published in newspapers and weekly magazines we find that they too are not immune from some of the criticisms made in this chapter. Not unexpectedly, newspapers, and other elements of the mass media, tend to focus their attention upon an industry when a tragedy

occurs or when a dispute arises between employers and employees.⁴⁶ Where tragedies involving deaths and severe injuries are concerned both the fishing industry and the coal-mining industry are subjected to attention by the mass media. However, there are numerous examples of newspaper reporting of events concerning the fishing industry that seem to follow, both stylistically and uncritically, the approach adopted by other contributors to the literature on the industry:

For example, under the headline

"No One Cares
say the Angry
wives of Hull"

the 'Observer' had the following to say of the foundering, with the loss of all hands, of two Hull trawlers in 1968:

"Because two trawlers from this port have vanished, wordlessly, into the sea with 20 men in each of them, the local fishing community is going through an emotional crisis quite unlike anything that has happened here before. Things came to a head yesterday in an open revolt of the fishermen's wives. Although nothing serious happened, one could sense that this was only because the angry women ran into no open resistance. Even the police kept mainly out of sight.

Yet to the fishing families who live here surrounded by mean Victorian brickwork along the Hessle Road, disaster of this kind, and even on the scale, is nothing new."⁴⁷

In similar vein, the 'Guardian' report of a third Hull trawler some few days later stated:

"A third Hull trawler, the *Ross Cleveland*, with 19 men on board, was lost off Iceland yesterday. Last night there were fears for the safety of six other trawlers, desperately riding out the worst weather conditions experienced in Icelandic waters for many years.

The loss of the *Ross Cleveland* stunned Hull, where fishermen's wives have begun a protest movement to demand greater safety at sea."⁴⁸

In an accompanying article, a 'Guardian' journalist wrote:

"On the fish dock today the news of the *Ross Cleveland*'s loss was passed around quietly as men went on with their work..... In the dockside public houses - where crews ashore held muted conversations about the lost men - intruders were not welcome. Fishermen keep their troubles to themselves and even the intervention of the Hull women has annoyed some men. They called them 'Fusspots'."⁴⁹

Newspaper stories are likely to give more weight to the emotive and sensational than the accurate and objective, particularly when those making the reports so often lack personal detailed experience of the industry and the circumstances surrounding the events they describe.

J. Rex has observed:

".....the media man has no values of his own. He is solely concerned with his audience and circulation figures."⁵⁰

The following quotation comes from the 'Observer' newspaper in the late sixties:

"Boundaries to the Arctic Seas"

"The Hull trawler, *Westella*, wallowing at noon in a Force 10 Arctic gale, exemplifies the danger which regularly make the death-rate among trawler-fishermen higher even than in the mines. For anything up to 10 months of the year, Hull fishermen trawl their nets hundreds of miles up the continental shelf, into Icelandic, Norwegian and even Russian waters. The port's Continental and Icelandic contacts go back for many centuries, and the first Icelandic complaint of poaching in territorial waters was in 1897. The link shows in street and family

names (Rensburg, Rastenburg, Begntson, Thordarson) and in an unusual number of blond heads. Because of the harshness of trawler life, recruits to the fishing industry are hard to find, usually join young and quit early. Tom Boyd who owns one of Hull's few remaining independent trawler fleets, says that his skippers normally last 20 years, are usually past their best by 55. During that time, they may spend as many as 320 days a year at sea, and earn anything from £6,000 to £11,000 a year.⁵¹

In this kind of journalism no sustained attempt is made to clarify the nature of the employment relationship between the employers and their employees, the trawler crews.

Rarely is there any meaningful analysis of the working conditions and all the other issues that surround the industry.⁵² In particular, apart from the romanticised emphasis given to the occupation of fishermen,⁵³ there is often a marked failure to make a distinction between vessel-owners and their fishermen-employees. This oversight is particularly noticeable in the popular press but it also occurs in the industry's trade newspapers, as in the following trade newspaper article:

"British fishermen slapped in a claim for aid totalling over £100 million on Tuesday. This was in response to the Government's promise of an urgent review of financial assistance to the industry. The British Fishing Federation is seeking about £20 million for its members."⁵⁴

The article was published in February, 1981, and written presumably by someone who at least knew that the British Fishing Federation is an employers' association which draws its members from the boards of directors of trawler companies.⁵⁵

The industry has not been immune from criticism in the literature. An example comes from J. Tunstall the sociologist.⁵⁶ In his Fabian Society pamphlet, '*Fish: an antiquated industry*', published in 1968, Tunstall argues that the fishing industry is:

"An industry which might have been invented by Karl Marx to prove that capitalism was inherently self-destructive. An industry set on an island floating in seas rich in fish, but yet an industry which is failing to produce fish for a world where people are hungry and protein scarce. An industry whose management in general and marketing management in particular makes most British industry by comparison seem self-confident, far-sighted and successful." ⁵⁷

Whatever the accuracy of Tunstall's statement, he does not provide in his pamphlet any concise explanation of the nature of the relationship between employers and employees.⁵⁸ J. Rex argues thus against this type of polemic:

"What we are pleading for and campaigning for is that sociologists should take on these ideologists in intellectual argument about the important issues and, by exposing their ideological distortions, reveal some of the loci of power and the sources of pain and suffering which they conceal. We do not, however, seek to replace one ideology by another. Rather, by removing the comforting myths which conceal reality, we seek to show the world to be an uncomfortable place....."⁵⁹

The survey of the general literature on the fishing industry indicates a failure by some contributors, (be they maritime historians, general writers interested in the industry for a while, or journalists) to go beyond superficialities in order to analyse the complexities

of the industry and the conditions of those who are thus employed. They do not enter the reality of the workplace of the fishermen nor discuss the structure of social relationships within the industry.⁶⁰ Theirs is an uncritical approach to events and social phenomena which helps deepen "the comforting myths concealing reality."⁶¹ The next chapter contains a survey of social science writings concerning the industry.⁶²

REFERENCES

1. It is the writer's opinion that a study such as this one, requires a critical review of both, what could be termed, the general literature and the documented research, undertaken by social scientists, concerning the fishing industry. Thus the review was divided into two sections, Chapter One dealing with the general literature review and the research literature review being incorporated in the chapter on theory and methods.
2. Technological change in fishing-gear technology is examined in Chapter 3.
3. J. Godfrey and N.A. Godman, '*The Scottish Fishing Industry: Technical Opportunities and Political Constraints*' in the Scottish Government Yearbook 1980, edited by N. Drucker and H.M. Drucker, Paul Harris Publishing, Edinburgh, 1979, pp. 186-206.
4. See Chapter 3 and passim.
5. The White Fish Authority was established by the British Government in 1951 in order to provide aid to the industry in terms of assistance with loans and grants for the purchase of fishing vessels, to create and conduct research and development programmes and, in addition, to provide consultancy services both in the United Kingdom and foreign countries. The Authority's first annual report was published in 1952. The WFA, whose principal powers were consolidated in the Sea Fish Industry Act 1970, is financed partly by a general levy of 0.8 pence per stone of landings of white fish in the United Kingdom (White Fish Authority (General Levy) (Amendment) Regulations Confirmatory Order 1974 (S.1. (1974) 1032). Administration of the WFA is controlled by a chairman-cum-chief executive, a deputy-chairman and five members, of whom only the first-named is an employee. All of these members are appointed to their posts by the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and the Secretary of State for Wales. Along with the Herring Industry Board (a similar if somewhat smaller and longer established organisation) the WFA will soon cease to exist and both organisations will be replaced by the Sea Fish Industry Authority. (Fisheries Bill, House of Commons Official Report, Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) Vol.996, No.23 (Col.1139), Monday 12 January 1981.

6. *White Fish Authority Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March, 1966*, HMSO, London, 1966, p.1.
7. *White Fish Authority Annual Report and Accounts 1976-7*, White Fish Authority, Edinburgh, 1977, p.3.
The WFA transferred its head office from London to Edinburgh in 1972.
8. R.B. Bilder, 'The Anglo-Icelandic Fisheries Dispute', *Wisconsin Law Review*, University of Wisconsin, USA, Vol.1973, No.1, pp. 42-131, gives a legalistic interpretation of an earlier dispute or, as some would contend, an earlier phase of a prolonged fisheries dispute between the two nations.
9. Godfrey and Godman, *op.cit.* pp.187-190.
10. *The Fishing Limits Act, 1976*, which came into effect on 1st January, 1977, created a two hundred miles zone (or, where appropriate, a median line between the U.K. and nearby coastal nations) and gave the U.K. state the authority to regulate fishing activities within the new zone.
11. Godfrey and Godman, *op.cit.* p.204.
12. There remain formidable problems with the catching, marketing and selling of such species as the blue whiting but there are some interesting developments taking place, e.g. "The development of a viable blue whiting fishery continues to be one of the most important projects in the (White Fish) Authority's R & D programme, and it is anticipated that within a few years this under-utilised member of the cod and haddock family will be making a valuable contribution to the British white fish supply."
White Fish Authority Annual Report and Accounts 1976-7, p.13.
13. *ibid.* p.14.
14. *Fishing News*, October 24th, 1980, p.15.
15. Purse-seine fishing gear which incorporates a purse-shaped net is used to catch pelagic fish, e.g. mackerel and herring which form thick shoals near the surface of the sea. The net obtains its name from both its shape and the way in which it is gathered up at the bottom to prevent fish escaping downward. Purse-seine nets, used on modern Scottish fishing vessels, are very large - up to 100 metres in depth and one kilometre long - and are not normally hauled aboard. Instead the fish are pumped or scooped out into the vessel's holds.

16. *White Fish Authority Annual Reports and Accounts 1975-6*, Edinburgh, 1976, p.3.
17. M. Gray, '*The Fishing Industries of Scotland 1790-1914*', published for the University of Aberdeen by Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1978, p.1. Gray views the Scottish fisheries as a series of industries rather than a single industry.
18. "Bank overdrafts are both general and heavy at each of the five major ports (Aberdeen, Fleetwood, Grimsby, Hull and Milford Haven). A distinction must, however, be drawn between the financial position of Hull (trawler) owners and that of the owners at the four other ports. The majority of the Hull owners, in view of the profitable results of their business in recent years, could no doubt readily obtain permanent capital in lieu of bank overdrafts if they wished to do so. Many of the owners at the four other ports, however, have become indebted to banks following on the depletion of their own capital by heavy trading losses, and accordingly there would have been an acute shortage of working capital had it not been for credit facilities provided by the banks." Second Report, '*The White Fish Industry*' of the Sea-Fish Commission for the United Kingdom, HMSO, Cmd, 5130, 1938, p.87.
19. This casual form of employment of fishermen, employed by the trawler companies, was challenged by the trade unions in 1946 but their efforts, as will be discussed in Chapter Seven, were entirely unsuccessful.
20. The term 'hunter' is self-explanatory in that the fisherman is engaged in seeking out fish to capture and sell as food. 'Co-adventurer' is usually used in the sense of the crew of a fishing vessel obtaining, as some do, their remuneration by way of an equal share, after certain expenses have been deducted, of the proceeds of the sale of the catch.
21. Numerous other 'distant-water' fishing nations, e.g. Japan and the U.S.S.R., have had to come to terms with the exclusion of their fishing vessels from once-traditional fishing grounds. See J. Dyson *op. cit.* pp.306-311.

22. V.A. Kiguori, '*Stability and Change in the Social Structure of Atlantic Coast Commercial Fisheries*', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, Princeton University, United States of America, 1967, p.iv.
23. There are a few notable exceptions to this rule and their contributions to the knowledge of the industry will be examined later in Chapter Two.
24. This phenomenon is not unique to the literature on the fishing industry as R. Williams demonstrates in his '*The Country and The City*', Chatto and Windus, London, 1973.
25. J.G. Bertram, *Harvest of the Sea*, p.447. John Murray, London, 1869.
26. An interesting and earlier example of the belief of this "nature" is provided by an episode which occurred during the walking tour of south-west England undertaken in 1798 by the English poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the English political essayist, William Hazlitt: a fisherman told the two walkers of the unsuccessful attempts by himself and some fellow fishermen to rescue a drowning youth, and when he was asked by Coleridge why he and his friends had risked their own lives in this endeavour, the fishermen could only reply, "Sir, we have a nature towards one another". Quoted by J.Kinnaird, '*William Hazlitt: Critic of Power*' Columbia University Press, New York, 1978, P.55.
27. Examples of this perspective adopted by numerous writers are provided later in the text, Chapter 2.
28. Sociologists and other social scientists are not immune from this kind of unthoughtful perspective. See G. Salaman, *Community and Occupation*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1974, p.51.
29. Professor L. Kamin, Professor of Psychology at Princeton University, said in an interview reported in the '*Guardian*', May 9, 1978, that what he 'would like to see more than anything else is a greater measure of scepticism amongst academics and the general public' where explanations of human behaviour are concerned.
30. W.T. Grenfell, MRCS, '*The Harvest of the Sea*', Fleming H. Revell Company, London, 1905, p.10.
31. *ibid* p.85.

32. E.J. March, '*Sailing Trawlers*', Percival Marshall and Company Ltd., London, 1953, p.105.
March's Book along with his '*Sailing Drifters*', Percival Marshall and Company Ltd., 1952, have proved to be useful source books, for the author, since he relied on the oral and written statements of retired fishermen. One aspect of their usefulness is the discussion of the working condition of the crews of the sailing trawlers, based largely on the oral and written statements he obtained from retired fishermen, some of whom had begun their working lives in the eighteen-eighties.
33. E.J. March, *op. cit.* p.115.
34. S. Walpole, '*The British Fish Trade*', in International Fisheries Exhibition Literature, Vol. 1, 1884, p.109.
35. E.J. March, *op. cit.* p.199. The information contained in this quotation came from original documents, e.g. accounts, shipyard specifications which were traced by March in his research. We have here an indication of the richness of his source material being employed, although supporting an untenable thesis concerning opportunities of acquiring vessel-ownership.
36. J. Rule, '*The British Fisherman 1840-1914*', Society for the Study of Labour History, Bulletin No.27, August 1973, p.57.
37. F.G. Aflalo, '*The Sea-Fishing Industry of England and Wales*', Edward Stanford, London, 1904, pp.33-34.
38. P.F. Anson, '*Fishermen and fishing ways*', republished by EP Publishing Limited, Wakefield, England, 1975, p.166. This book was first published in 1932 by George Harrap & Co. Ltd., London.
39. *ibid.* p.161
40. Anson is not alone in expressing disfavour with the growth in the numbers of steam trawlers and the development of limited liability companies in this sector, see Chapter Three and Chapter Four for a more detailed discussion of this phenomenon.

41. See Chapter Five for an analysis of this discontent and the industrial conflict it gave rise to amongst fishermen and their employers in the late nineteenth century and the twentieth century.
42. J.B. Priestley, *English Journey*, Penguin Books, Middlesex, 1977, pp.339-340. This book was first published by William Heinemann, of London, in 1934. It may be the case that Priestley was being a little facetious here, since elsewhere in his account of his sojourn in Hull he described its inhabitants as ".....pleasant but queer. They are queer because they are not quite Yorkshire and yet not quite anything else." *ibid*, p.332.
43. A. Villiers, *'The Deep-Sea Fisherman'*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1970, pp.16-17.
44. J. Rule, *op. cit.* p.57.
45. J. Dyson, *op. cit.* p.17.
46. In recent years, social scientists have sought to analyse the coverage of events by the mass media and this form of investigation has generated considerable controversy amongst sociologists, television producers, newspaper editors and journalists. In a number of instances the journalists have rejected the findings of the sociologists concerning the bias in their presentation of events and have in fact accused the latter of bias and distortion in their research. See The Glasgow University Media Group publication, *'Bad News'*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1978.
47. *Observer*, 4th February 1968. Two Hull trawlers were lost in 1955 with all hands (40 men).
48. *Guardian*, 6th February 1968.
49. *ibid*.
50. J. Rex, *'Sociology and the Demystification of the Modern World'*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1974, p.140.
51. *Observer*, 28th May, 1967.

52. This employment question may be a more crucial issue for those who live in small and remote fishing communities on the peripheral shores of the United Kingdom. See J. Coull, J.H. Goodlad and G.T. Sheves, '*The Fisheries in the Shetland Area*' sponsored and published by the Shetland Islands Council and The White Fish Authority, Edinburgh 1979.
53. During an interview with a senior official of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland, the author was informed that "fishermen follow a vocation and with respect to legislation, wages, hours of work and related issues, they should not be grouped with merchant seamen or manual workers in other industries".
54. *Fishing News*, February 20th, 1981.
55. The author found numerous examples of this oversight in the general literature.
56. Tunstall's contribution to the sociological literature on the fishing industry is subjected to detailed discussion in Chapter Two and later chapters.
57. J. Tunstall, '*Fish: an antiquated industry*', Fabian Tract 380, London, 1968, p.1.
58. See M.P. Jackson, '*Industrial Relations*', Croom Helm, London, 1975.
59. J. Rex, *op. cit.* pp. 8 and 9.
60. It is evident that Tunstall does not fall into this category but he nonetheless offers a biased view of the industry in his polemical essay. This problem is one that the research worker in the field of industrial relations encounters, almost by definition. J. Rex observed "The industrial relations expert..... always stands in danger of representing management interests as though they were scientific truth." J. Rex, *op. cit.* p.125.
61. *ibid.* p.140.
62. The author took the view that this division of the literature survey was the most appropriate method in the circumstances.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND RESEARCH METHODS EMPLOYED IN THE STUDY

C H A P T E R 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND THE RESEARCH METHODS
EMPLOYED IN THE STUDY2.1 A Critique of the Social Scientific Literature on Fishing Activities, Fishing Industries and Fishermen.

When one turns to the extant social scientific accounts of fishing industries in western capitalist nations, of which J. Tunstall's *'The Fishermen: The Sociology of an Extreme Occupation'*¹ is a major contribution, we find a number of similarities with the general literature on the British fishing industry. For example, there is a similar emphasis placed on what is seen as the uniqueness of this form of work-activity, which again is perceived to be extreme and both socially and economically marginal, extreme in that it is performed in an alien environment and subjected to a wide range of weather conditions, and socially and economically marginal both in the sense that it employs a very small percentage of the nation's workforce (see Figure 9, page 488, *'Numbers of Regularly Employed Fishermen for the Years 1965 to 1979'*) and in its contribution to the gross domestic product.²

This chapter questions a number of simplistic observations regarding the catching sector of the fishing industry and argues in particular that the social science research reviewed in the chapter fails to consider not only the similarities which exist between the catching sector and other sectors of the industry but also the interdependence of the industry with other industries.³

In a paper published in a Scottish academic journal, J.G. Suttinen, an economist, sought to explain the

circumstances within which the share of remuneration -
as compared with wages -

"would be preferred by the relevant
parties in the fishing industry". 4

Using a mathematical model which incorporates a simplified
element of choice of payment systems to support his
contention, Suttinen dismisses the argument that the
share system is not in the best interests of fishermen
and that it inhibits both investment and technological
progress:

"Instead, the share system of remuneration
is viewed as making a significant positive
contribution to the development of a
fishing industry."⁵

Given that the crews of fishing vessels are "relevant
parties in the fishing industry", their interests, by
implication, are not given the same weighting by Suttinen
as are those of the vessel owners:

"Fishing entrepreneurs are unambiguously
better off with the share system. It
allows spreading some of the risk among
the crew, thus reducing the cost of risk
bearing, and provides a work incentive
that makes it less costly to extract the
desired level of labour services from the
crew."⁶

Suttinen's paper does not deal with the contrasting
systems of remuneration for fishermen employed by the
trawler companies and those employed in the traditional
inshore-fishing fleet.⁷ Most of the former receive both
a weekly wage and a percentage share of the proceeds of
the sale of the catch (see Appendices 1, 2 and 14,
'Crew's Agreements')

whereas the latter are known as share fishermen, that is to say, they receive equal shares of the crew's allocation of the vessel's earnings and are classified, by the Department of Employment, as self-employed even although they can obtain unemployment benefit if they are prevented from working due to circumstances outwith their control, e.g. severe weather conditions which keeps the vessels in port. The vessels they crew are usually owned by the skipper or jointly owned by him, members of his family and/or members of the crew.

Such superficial analysis ignores the influence of history and culture in the durability and persistence of certain systems of remuneration, and does not take account of the struggles of fishermen's organisations to establish bargaining agreements with trawler companies, concerning the payment of weekly wages, which have a long history in Great Britain.⁸ It also neglects the question of the compliance of labour, acquired from the labour market, which might be brought about by both the power of the employers and what the sociologist, M. Weber called a "constellation of material interests".⁹ J. Rex makes the observation:

"The actual basis of the relationship between management and men, which exists when the firm is working, is a contractual one, and contracts rest upon negotiation and bargaining. The normal form of bargaining in the long-established market is collective bargaining, and that means the use of power rather than mere market sanctions to win compliance. Thus it will be a fact that, underlying the contractual relations between management and worker, which complete the chain of authority, there is a continual shifting balance of power." ¹⁰

Other criticisms of the profit-sharing scheme favoured by Suttinen and many fishing entrepreneurs, were made by a group of economists and sociologists in a document published by the Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs of the Commission of the European Economic Community, as follows:

- "1. The fisherman shares the operator's risks, but as a member of the crew he has no say in decision-making;
2. In the absence of regulations on manning, the system encourages fishermen to agree on a reduction in the number of shares to increase their own share of the profit at the expense of safety at sea;
3. Fishermen take risks by continuing to fish in bad weather with a view to increasing profits;
4. All too often it is not possible for those concerned to determine the factors used in calculating the proportion of the proceeds to be shared out.¹¹

Whilst these criticisms of the share system of remuneration have not been made by disinterested observers, since the authors of the document recommend the replacement of such a payment system by one of wages and a share of the profits of the catch, they are nonetheless worth our consideration. Suttinen's analysis accepts uncritically the established arrangements in some industries which reflect owner interests but not necessarily those of employees, which must also be considered in detail by researchers concerned with an analysis of industrial relations in the fishing industry.¹²

Social anthropologists studying fishermen, fishing activities, fishing communities and fishing industries have, in the main, confined themselves to the examination of small fishing ports and villages. The introduction to a collection of essays on fishermen edited by two social anthropologists stated:

"These essays deal chiefly with commercial fishermen in Newfoundland, Norway, Shetland and Sweden. They describe some of the contemporary fishing adaptations developed in the long history of the North Atlantic. As studies of human behaviour, the essays approach fishermen from different perspectives; yet they are linked by a common search for an understanding of how man adapts to a marine environment. Considered together, they apprehend some of the range and continuities found in cultural and environmental relationships in marine settings, particularly those in which man exploits the sea's biological resources."¹³

With one exception, an assistant professor of geography, the researchers were little concerned with the sociological analysis of such social processes as social conflict, power, compliance and powerlessness¹⁴. There is, for example, very little discussion of trade unionism in the fishing industries of the North Atlantic nations and what there is, is by way of footnotes and references to the work of the few sociologists who have studied the occupation of fishermen and the industry, in the English speaking countries, of the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans.¹⁵

These research-workers are, of course, concerned naturally enough with what they see as important issues, and conceptual and theoretical advances, in social anthropology and they provide the research workers in related

social scientific disciplines with comprehensive and detailed descriptive accounts of social and occupational groups that are of much more than peripheral interest.

R. Andersen in his essay, *'Hunt and Deceive : Information Management in Newfoundland Deep-Sea Trawler Fishing'*, gives an informative exposition of the relationships, in some circumstances conflicting, that are developed between a trawler skipper, members of his crew, shore-based managers and the skippers and crews of other vessels.¹⁶ Such work, however, is, by and large, untheoretical, unsystematic and narrowly empirical, a criticism which can be levelled against much empirical research in the social sciences.¹⁷

Similar criticism can be offered against G.W. Horobin's paper *'Community and Occupation in the Hull Fishing Industry'*, even although his research interests and research methodology are different from those of the present study. Horobin was concerned with an analysis of the inter-relationship between a community and, what might be termed, a community of occupations, with special attention focussed upon the urban element of a particular fishing community:

"In this area, there lives a group of people, united not only by the bonds of spatial contiguity, but by a common dependence upon one industry; an industry which, moreover is essentially different from any other, and which by its nature affects the whole life of its workers. This occupational bond is often reinforced by the bonds of biological and social kinship, so that the whole area appears very closely knit."¹⁹

Horobin's paper is an empirical case study of the occupational structure of a particular neighbourhood dependent upon a specific industry and the implications of this interdependence for housing redevelopment plans. Horobin accepts the notion, already criticised in this thesis, of the marginality of the industry; this results in the paradoxical statement that:

".....fishing occupies only a minor part of the economy. Thus in 1951, fishermen accounted for only 0.1 per cent of the total working population in England and Wales. Even in Hull, the port which lands the most fish, the proportion of the working force so engaged was only 2.8 per cent, though fishing is the largest single industry in the city. "21

The statement is not necessarily contradictory if Horobin means that the industry, although significant in the micro-environment of Hull, is insignificant in the macro-environment of the nation. But even if such a distinction is valid, Horobin can still be criticised for failing to make the distinction explicit.²² Fishermen form the sea-going element in the fishing industry's total work-force even although their place of work, the environment in which they work, and some of the work they have to perform, distinguishes them from the ancillary workers in the industry and others engaged in other maritime occupations, e.g. seamen and engineers in the merchant navy.²³ They, nevertheless, are part of the same social milieu, the working class, presumably with shared norms, values and a common culture in a regionally important industrial community.²⁴ In this sense, the community

described by Horobin shares many similarities with other regionally-based industrial communities.²⁵

One sociological, or anthropological, study of social conflict in the fishing industry is P. Duncan's *'Conflict and Co-operation amongst Trawlermen'*.²⁶ Duncan focuses his study of conflict on the divisions, as he sees them, between engine-room personnel and deck-hands (or deck-crews) on Hull trawlers. He places much emphasis on the writings of the social anthropologist, M. Gluckman.²⁷ Duncan proposed that:

"In this case study of the Hull trawlermen the conflict seems to be implicitly in that the very division of labour between engineers and fishermen as overlaid by the system of payment and the community context of social relations. It is impossible to say in any quantitative sense how much conflict there would be if the community context and the system of payment were different. However, it is the contention of the writer that some degree of conflict is inherent in the process of division of labour itself."²⁸

Duncan gives a descriptive account of the shipboard division of labour and the contrasting and often conflicting perceptions that each occupational group, deck-crews and engineers, has of the work performed, and payments received, by the other group but there is little analysis of the employment relationship between the trawler crews and their employers.²⁹ He does, however, isolate and discuss the work cleavages found on the trawlers and the differences in perspectives between the engineers and the deck-crews:

"The basic cleavage between deck and engine-room is clearly reflected in the structure and functioning of trade unions, and, in turn, trade union action has modulated the relations between engineers and fishermen. Basic features of the system of social relations, like the method of payment, seem to have both divisive and unifying consequences. Social relations in the trade union context are pervaded by the same kind of ambivalence that is characteristic of social relations on the trawler."³⁰

In his study, Duncan follows Gluckman and the American sociologist, L.A. Coser, in viewing social conflict as a stabilising agency rather than as a disruptive process,³¹ arguing that there are, in some forms of social conflict, significant integrative elements that prevent an organisation, or a society, from becoming unstable. Conflict, he maintains, should not be viewed as destructive, or pathological, but as a kind of safety valve or, if regulated, as a means by which competing groups can be persuaded to work in close co-operation and harmony.³² Emphasis here is placed upon social consensus, normative integration and shared values and attitudes.³³ However, perhaps, because of this theoretical position, Duncan does not attempt to analyse the employment relationship in terms of the power of the trawler companies and the compliance and powerlessness of their employees.³⁴

Duncan's study fails to answer questions concerning the employment practices of the trawler companies and the apparently passive compliance of their employees. It could be, for example, that the "cleavages", and hostile relations between the engineers and deck-crews, where

trades union commitment and activities are concerned, could influence the employment relationship to the advantage of the employers, a matter which will be examined in Chapters Four and Five.³⁵ The disputes between the engineers and deck-crews work to their mutual disadvantage and to the advantage of their employers who can play one against the other, whereas a united workforce would be a more powerful workforce, a salient point which Duncan completely ignores.³⁶ Duncan's failure to analyse this feature of his subject may be due in part to his concentration on the separateness of the catching sector from other segments of the industry. A different, more general, perspective would both encompass those features of the industry which distinguish it from other industries and the interconnectedness of the industry with other institutions within the framework of a capitalist economic and social system.³⁷ (see Figure 1, p. 43 , Diagram of the Processing and Distribution Network of the Fishing Industry)

Although the social science literature contains numerous historical, political, economic and social anthropological descriptions of fishermen and forms of fishing activities, in widely contrasting cultural and economic settings, the British fishing industry and fishermen have not been the subject of widespread and systematic sociological examination.³⁸ Concerning these social scientific analysts of maritime occupations R. Andersen and C. Wadel stated:

"None of these writers has attempted to formulate what may be termed an anthropology or sociology of fishing (or any other marine related occupation), let alone of marine societal adaptations in general. We have yet to answer the question of where and how fishermen and fishing fit in among hunting, pastoral, agricultural, peasant and industrial adaptations."³⁹

In this rather sparse field of sociological interest, J. Tunstall's *'The Fishermen: The Sociology of an Extreme Occupation'*, first published in 1962 as *'The Fishermen'*,⁴⁰ is regarded as the major sociological account of the distant-water trawler companies in Britain. Whilst it has been criticised for its untheoretical and unsystematic approach to the subject⁴¹ and its stress on the economic marginality and occupational extremeness of deep-sea fishing, it is an important contribution to the nascent sub-discipline of maritime sociology.⁴² Tunstall's work was used as a major reference and secondary source for much of the author's own research.

Tunstall has described the recruitment of fishermen, by trawler companies, their employment and working conditions on large trawlers in the port of Hull, his approach to the study being shaped by this statement:

"I must admit that the extreme nature of the Hull fisherman's job attracted me, just as it attracted Mr. Priestley (J.B. Priestley) in 1934. I too thought the fishermen would be more interesting than most other groups of people in England. This book is intended for the general reader, but the account is a sociological one - and I hope that it may also be of interest to academic sociologists as a description of an occupation. From what has already been said it must be obvious that this book is not intended to be a work of neutral social science. I am on the side of the fishermen"⁴³

Since Tunstall's book is considered to be the foremost in its field and probably the most oft-quoted by social scientists and others,⁴⁴ it will be examined in this thesis. In the writer's opinion Tunstall over-emphasised the so-called uniqueness of the fishing industry, its distinctive 'extremeness' and its economic and social marginality to which reference has already been made.⁴⁵ This alleged distinctiveness of the catching sector of the industry ignores not only some similarities with other sectors of the industry, e.g. the casual employment for decades of the fish market porters, many of whom were ex-fishermen,⁴⁶ but also important interdependences and relationships within the industry, and with other industries, capital and the state.⁴⁷

Also, the fishermen, according to Tunstall, are deeply fatalistic:

"The fisherman, then, is intensely fatalistic. There is sometimes in his fatalism an element of wistfulness, almost of delight. He seems at times to be in love with the system he believes to be corrupt. The explanation for his eager cynicism about any idea of reform may be that the ordinary fisherman has nearly always suffered a personal failure. Unlike other casual jobs (such as docking used to be) the man who becomes a deckhand has at the back of his mind a dream of making the skipper's large income. This means that most ordinary deckhands have suffered disillusionment on a personal level, although many will deny that they ever had such ambitions. Their fatalism is tinged with silence."⁴⁸

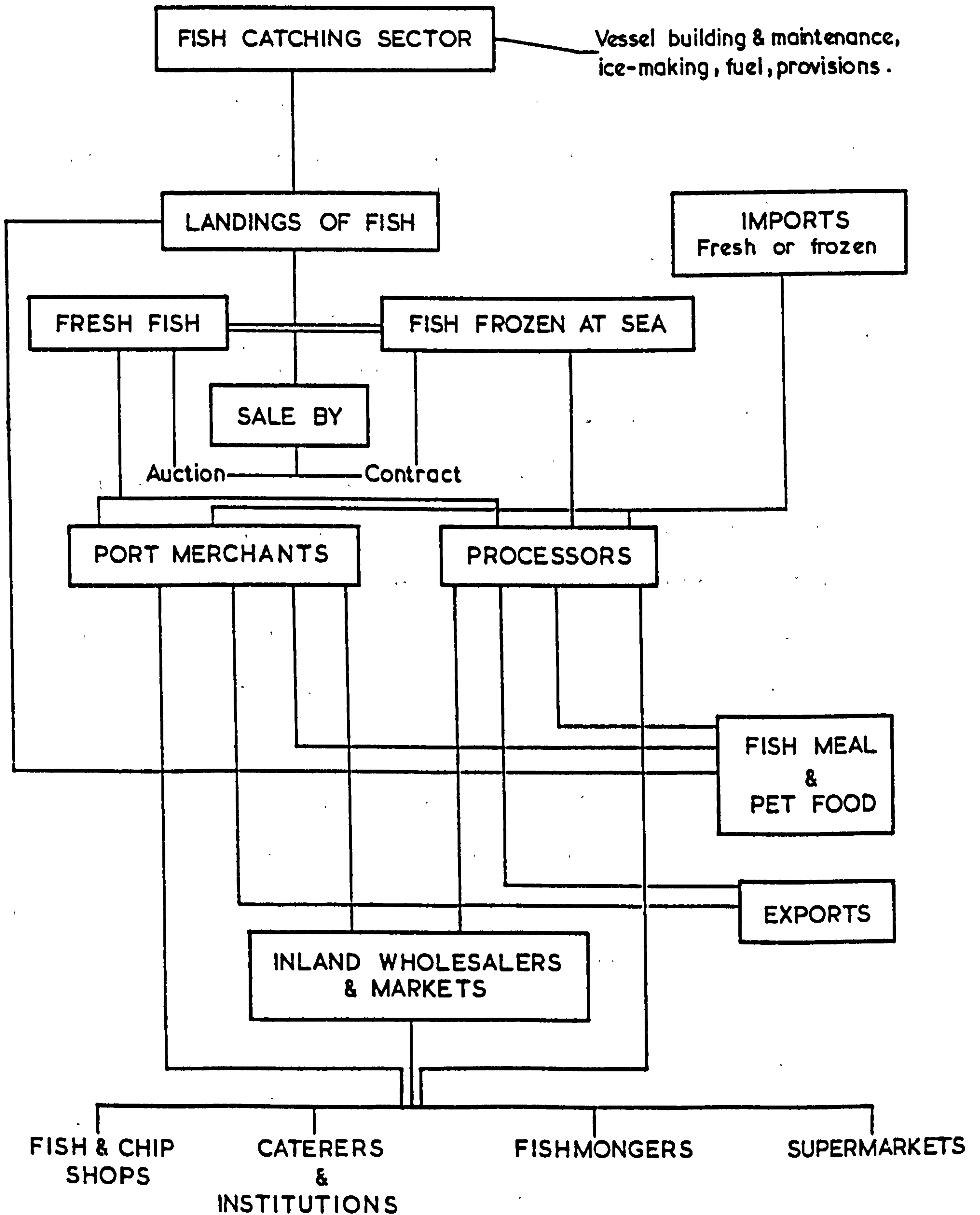
This passage, which offers no supporting evidence for its assertions, is in line with the romantic, mystical accounts of the fishing industry already quoted. It is,

for example, similar in style to the quotation from Villiers' book on page 16. The discussion gives no explanation of the way in which the fishermen view their world,⁴⁹ and the reader is given no opportunity to consider the important economic, political and social inter-connections between individuals and small groups, as well as the larger, powerful forces in the environment. Tunstall outlines some features of the recruitment, selection, working conditions and domestic circumstances of fishermen and he and others have also provided *post hoc* descriptive essays on shipboard life but with little analysis of the consequences for the industry of the relationships between labour, capital and the state.⁵⁰

Even where the concern is with the structure of the industry itself, the literature is sparse and tends to be simplistic and partisan in relation to the stress, tensions and social conflict generated by various factors. These include such things as the condition and location of fish stocks; the geographical situation of fishing ports; the change from sail to steam as a form of motive power; changes in fishing-gear technology and systems of fish detection; capital investment in fishing vessels and fishing-gear; and political factors such as the degree of power exercised by the various groups within the industry in relation to one another, the state, and supra-national organisations.⁵¹

FIGURE 1

DIAGRAM OF THE PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION
NETWORK OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY.



2.2 The Theoretical and Methodological Framework of the Analysis

This thesis attempts to analyse structural and organisational change in the catching sector of the British fishing industry during periods of considerable instability. Of particular concern is the analysis of the employment relationship between the trawler companies based in English and Scottish ports, and their trawler-crew employees. An attempt is made to explain the growing assertiveness of the trade union representing the majority of these employees and its efforts to bring about major changes in the employment relationship during a period of apparent decline.⁵²

The analysis will extend beyond the boundaries of post hoc investigation, description and interpretation,⁵³ and will try to take account of ecological, geophysical and technological factors, along with economic, political and social circumstances, all of which have important consequences for the whole of the fishing industry, in terms of stability, conflict and change.⁵⁴ All these factors are important in shaping the patterns of industrial relations within the industry,⁵⁵ as is a critical examination of the role of the state, vis-à-vis labour and capital, in the organisation and supervision of the industry.⁵⁶

2.3i The Historical Dimension

Three dimensions are incorporated in the research. The first, the historical one, is essential to an understanding of the British fishing industry in the late twentieth century. Tunstall's study of the Hull trawler fishermen begins with a description of the working conditions on board trawlers in the late nineteenth century.⁵⁷ This historical dimension is important since the discussion of the antecedents of current forms of ownership and control, and trade unionism in the industry facilitate a clearer explanation of change and continuity.⁵⁸ C. Wright Mills argues that unless the researcher employs an historical element in his, or her, work it is both difficult to perceive the interactions between small social groups and larger social structures and also gain an understanding of the economic, political, technological and social factors which bring about changes at the micro-level:

"Not only are our chances of becoming aware of structure increased by historical work; we cannot hope to understand any single society, even as a static affair,⁵⁹ without the use of historical materials."

This thesis analyses events and circumstances in the period 1946 to 1979 without neglecting the wider historical perspective. This entails a detailed historical examination of technological change in the fishing industry, with particular emphasis on the change from wind to steam as the motive power for vessels, changes

in the ownership and control of the trawlers and the emergence of trade unionism in the industry. This approach is designed to avoid the criticism levelled by C. Wright-Mills against so-called 'historical explanation'.

"There is one 'use of history' rather common in social science today, that is, in fact, more a ritual than a genuine use. I refer to the dull little peddling known as 'sketching in the historical background' with which studies of contemporary society are often prefaced, and to the *ad hoc* procedure known as 'giving an historical explanation'." 60

An examination of the British fishing industry with its inter-connections between the labour force, employers and the state and the conflicts between their respective interests and values, including the emergence of trade unionism makes an historical dimension essential. It facilitates the applications of sociological theory to the historical data ⁶¹ and thus plays an important balancing role between the theoretical and empirical elements of the research work. ⁶² In addition, the adoption of an historical dimension enables one to make a critical assessment of other contributions to the development of the discipline. ⁶³

2.3ii The Social Dimension

The second dimension to be discussed is the social dimension which represents an important strand in the analysis. ⁶⁴ Except in the broadest sense, fishing need

not take any specific historical form as a matter of inevitability.⁶⁵ Rather, the specific forms we find are, *inter alia*, the social product of the interactions of groups of people with one another and with their material environment. The nature of the activity and the structure of the industry are thus contingent on many factors and need not necessarily take the form we see in Britain.⁶⁶

Structural changes can and are brought about by way of re-orientations in the inter-actions and inter-connections between groups, and by developments in the interactions between some of those groups and the material environment.⁶⁷

An example will illustrate the need for this dimension to be part of the overall research perspective. It is often asserted that it is in the nature of the industry that fishing is a dangerous occupation.⁶⁸ Justification for this contention is usually sought by reference to the high mortality and serious accident rates on board fishing vessels, compared with other industries such as coal-mining, construction and manufacturing industries.⁶⁹ Now, however, true it may be, in a general sense, that the sea, particularly in the Arctic, is a formidable material environment in which to work, the causes of deaths and accidents at sea are a matter for investigation, not mere assertion, and among these factors as we shall see, are the social processes of interactions among the various interest groups.⁷⁰

There is much empirical evidence to substantiate the argument that social factors influence the degree to which the material environment becomes the decisive factor in the physical hardship and dangers encountered by fishermen. For example, the Interim Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety, chaired by Admiral Sir Deric Holland-Martin, which was established by the Labour Government in 1968 following the foundering of three Hull trawlers with the loss of fifty-nine men, stated:

"Severe gales and icing conditions which seriously endanger trawlers at sea are relatively exceptional occurrences. But bad weather occurs in Icelandic waters every winter and makes the work of the individual trawlerman on deck during fishing operations dangerous as well as arduous. Weather not severe enough to endanger the ships themselves may nonetheless cause accidents amongst the crews. Trawler skippers therefore have to keep weather conditions continually under review and must judge when, in the interests of safety, fishing must stop."⁷¹

Complaints were made to the Committee that fishing was frequently continued despite severe weather conditions and that even although the fishing vessels, in these physical circumstances, were not always at risk, the lives of the deck-crews working on exposed decks with unprotected deck-machinery and equipment, were put at considerable risk.⁷² In the light of this serious complaint and allegations concerning the skippers' behaviour, the appointment was suggested to the Committee of a Control Officer, supervising a weather advisory service, with the power to order skippers when to cease fishing

operations on grounds of safety. However, the Committee reported:

".....the Trawler Officers' Guilds in Hull and Grimsby are not fully convinced of the value of the services.⁷³ They have suggested to us some specific improvements which could usefully be made to the conventional weather forecasts already available to skippers from Iceland and from the United Kingdom; but they consider that in most respects the existing services are adequate to give skippers proper warning of the approach of dangerous conditions. They are particularly critical of the idea that a Control Officer should be empowered to tell skippers what to do; his role, they argue, should be only to offer advice, leaving the final decision to the skippers themselves."⁷⁴

There was a broad measure of agreement between trawler skippers and their employers:

"Like the trawler officers, all the owners consider that any special weather service should be authorised only to advise skippers, on whose shoulders alone responsibility for the safety of the trawlers at sea should rest."⁷⁵

However, it is the task of the research worker to probe underneath the surface of such agreements and complementary perspectives between a group of employees (the trawler-skippers) and their employers (the trawler-owners). Tunstall in his account of the recruitment and working conditions of trawler crews, outlines what he sees as the reality of this consensual view:

"Another important point about the fact that future skippers do not take shore jobs is that the future skipper is always a man who accepts the world of fishing as it is. Willingness to stay in the job and slog away at it is indicated by such behaviour. This involves accepting the naked power of the trawler-owners and being prepared to comply with their wishes."⁷⁶

Later in the text, Tunstall discussed the pressures exerted, directly and indirectly, on the newly-appointed trawler-skipper by his company's managers and directors:

"He (the new skipper) has been through bad weather himself, he may have seen a bridge (wheel-house) caved-in by a giant wave or men washed overboard to drown in the dark astern (behind the ship), but he has also seen risks taken in bad weather without such havoc. He must take this risk, for the odds of disaster only catch up with you over a period of time, the odds against success as a skipper take you under a few trips (voyages). For these reasons new skippers are feared by deckhands. The men complain that they curse and rave like madmen, they take the ship full ahead when waves are coming aboard and men are being washed around in the pounds (sectioned off areas of the open deck)."77

Where the working conditions are concerned then, the effects of the material environment are thus influenced by the social dimension. Tunstall described the workplace of the deckcrews in this passage:

"The job, especially in the winter, is carried on in extreme conditions, as these trawlers fish off the coasts of Iceland, Russia and Greenland.⁷⁸ The job is extreme in the number of hours worked - at the fishing grounds deckhands can be on duty for 180 hours in ten days of active fishing; 'deckie-learners'⁷⁹ who may be no more than sixteen years old, nevertheless also do eighteen hours work a day for ten days in succession, although as long ago as 1833 an Act was passed to prevent children under eighteen, in certain kinds of factories, from working more than twelve hours a day."⁸⁰

Much of what Tunstall says can be substantiated from other sources.⁸¹ One can, for example, gain a deeper understanding from unguarded comments made by employers'

representatives. The following is, perhaps, an odd example:

"Complaints were made that.....in the Hull fleet many, often simple, safety precautions are absent - winches are insufficiently protected and regularly cause maimed hands, loss of fingers etc., the trawler's rail is usually so low as not to prevent men being washed overboard. Mr. Lionel Cox, Secretary of the Hull Fishing Vessel Owners' Association and the Hull Fishing Industry Association, who agreed to answer some of the men's complaints, made this comment: "People do get swept overboard. But, after all, they often get swept back again."82

Other forms of related economic and social factors accentuate the physical dangers and difficulties with which the crews of fishing vessels have to contend. That skipper-owners of smaller fishing vessels are not immune from the economic vicissitudes of the industry, with their implications for the safety of crews and vessels, is evidenced by the following extract of a letter written by such a person:

"Too many of our fishermen are losing their lives now by, in most instances, trying to work in weather conditions unsuitable for the vessels. They are being forced to do this solely due to the present impossible situation."83

The foregoing empirical evidence helps to confirm the importance of the social dimension in the scheme of things. The material environment within which accidents and deaths become more or less likely is emphatically, though not exclusively, a social product.⁸⁴ Despite its theoretical and methodological shortcomings, Tunstall's text is a valuable contribution to our understanding of this sector

of the industry because he demystifies, to some extent, the romantic perception people have of the fishermen, their work-place and the environment within which they perform their work. Tunstall places much stress on concrete observable behaviour, an emphasis that enables many useful insights to be gained from a critical reading of his text.⁸⁵

2.3iii The Power Dimension

The third dimension to be discussed is that of power and the related concept of ideology. Here two questions arise: Does the application of a theory of power to an empirical investigation enable the research worker to offer a more comprehensive analysis and understanding of social phenomena? And can an empirical examination, utilising such a theoretical perspective, assist in the development of the theory of the dynamic of power, in terms of its sources, structure, form and its inter-relationships with compliance, acquiescence, powerlessness and resistance?

S. Lukes in his book, *'Power: A Radical View'*⁸⁶ discusses various approaches to the study of power and compliance in society and states that the analysis of power involves three dimensions:

".....distinguishing features of these three views of power: that is the view of the pluralists (which I shall call the one-dimensional view); the view of their critics (which I shall call the two-dimensional view); and a third view of power (which I shall call the three-dimensional view)....."⁸⁷

These different views of power require an initial explanation. First of all, the one-dimensional view emphasises the examination of behaviour in decision-making processes where there is a visible conflict of interests. The two-dimensional view of power involves an analysis of both decision-making and non decision-making processes. Here again the emphasis is on observable conflict since non decision-making also reveals itself in conditions of conflict, i.e. it is possible to determine who it is that determines the structure and contents of the political agenda. In this way, its supporters contend it represents a theoretical advance over the one-dimensional view of power. Lukes' three dimensional view of power is distinguished from the one- and two-dimensional view in that it attempts to assess the means by which issues are prevented from appearing on the agenda even in the absence of actual, observable conflict.⁸⁸ Elsewhere in the introduction to his text, Lukes contends:

"The view I shall defend is.....
irradicably evaluative and
'essentially contested' and
empirically applicable.⁸⁹

It became apparent to the writer when he first encountered Lukes' text that here was a theory that was not only testable in an empirical investigation of certain sectors of the British fishing industry, but one that enabled a research-worker to re-work the seams that had been opened up by Tunstall.⁹⁰ Further, with some modification, it allowed one to follow T.B. Bottomore's view that a fundamental feature of research is the task of criticism of extant theories.⁹¹ It seemed then that Lukes' conception of power with its three-dimensional framework was, as he averred in his text, eminently 'empirically applicable'. However, whilst the perspective developed by Lukes is empirically applicable there are elements of it which are not open to empirical investigation, for example, the latent and covert dimensions of power and conflict are not always discernible to the person conducting the research.⁹²

At this stage of the discussion, some elucidation of the different views of power in the literature is required, in order to illustrate the reasons for following Lukes, in the main, and not others, in the testing of the empirical application of theory.⁹³ First of all, power, as a theoretical idea, has received sparse attention by numerous sociologists and social scientists whilst others have chosen to disregard it altogether. Hyman and Brough argue:

"Others simply ignore the whole issue (of power). Hence a well known *Dictionary of Sociology* (Mitchell, 1968) contains no entry on 'power' Smelser (1963) lists 'sanctions' as well as 'values' and 'norms', as important bases of social order, but scarcely explains how the use of sanctions is generated; 'power' is not thought to deserve an entry in his index. Neglect of power may be explicitly justified."⁹⁴

One of the foremost structural-functionalist theorists, Talcott-Parsons, perceives power in abstract terms, as:

"the generalised capacity of a social system to get things done in the interests of collective goals."⁹⁵

Structural-functionalists argue that a society maintains its equilibrium through the manipulation of its system of rewards and prestige which determines an efficient distribution of its members to the various strata. Such a system will ensure that the more difficult and onerous tasks in a society will be performed by those with the appropriate skills and talents. Moreover, where the application of advanced technical knowledge and skills is needed, e.g. doctors, lawyers and architects, people will be willing to submit themselves to prolonged periods of training. The unequal distribution of wealth, prestige and power is, for the structural-functionalists, the means by which a society motivates people to perform the roles for which they are best suited and in which they are most needed.

Power, for Parsons, is not of central importance in the analysis of societies and organisations and he sees the uneven distribution of power in a society as just one dimension of the division of labour. Power is, then, viewed as a means by which collective goals are obtained. Numerous critics have seized upon the structural-functionalist explanation of the relationship between power and social values as one of its major inadequacies.⁹⁶ The failure to explain adequately the definition, origins, nature, durability and acceptance of consensual values is a major theoretical flaw.⁹⁷ Moreover, structural-functionalists appear to accept the uneven distribution of power within a society as given. Further, the concept of 'collective goals' is viewed with scepticism by most European sociologists.⁹⁸

Hyman and Brough in their critique of structural-functionalism contend that:

"Again the perspective is either the 'unseen hand' or else the 'social contract'. Neither explanatory device is particularly plausible. We would therefore assert the need to bring the analysis of power - the differential distribution of control over and access to resources and sanctions, both material and ideological - into the centre of the analysis of social values and inequality. Against the simple idealism of functionalist theory we posit a dialectic in which the structure of power helps shape the prevailing beliefs and values, and these in turn help reinforce the unequal distribution of power and material advantages."⁹⁹

Lukes, too, is highly critical of the structural-functionalist theory of consensual values and behaviour determining the structure of authority in society.

"Parson's conceptualisation of power ties in to authority, consensus and the pursuit of collective goals, and dissociates it from conflicts of interest and, in particular, from coercion and force. In Parson's case the linking of power to authoritative decisions and collective goals serves to reinforce his theory of social integration as based on value consensus by concealing from view the whole range of problems that have concerned so-called 'coercion theorists', precisely under the rubric of power. By definitional fiat, phenomena of coercion, exploitation, manipulation and so on cease to be phenomena of power - and in consequence disappear from the theoretical landscape.¹⁰⁰

Similarly, the one-dimensional view of power, developed by, amongst others, R. Dahl and N. Potesby,¹⁰¹ is also subjected to criticism by Lukes. One of the problems with this view of power, Lukes contends, is its emphasis on the analysis of concrete, observable events and behaviour. For example, Dahl stated:

"My intuitive idea of power is something like this: A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do.¹⁰²

In similar vein, Potesby asserted that power can be examined by analysing:

".....who participates, who gains and loses, and who prevails in decision making."¹⁰³

Lukes criticism of these theorists, who are known as pluralists, is that they fail to explain, at all adequately, the reality of those interests that are not voiced and are not then observable to the pluralists' perspective and this constitutes a serious theoretical flaw. Pluralists'

view society as made up of numerous autonomous but interdependent social groups which possess equality of power, hence pluralists, working in the field of industrial relations, contend that in an industrial society there is a roughly equal balance of power between the state, organised labour and the capital, and hence there is an equal distribution of power between labour and capital.¹⁰⁴ Luke argues:

"They (the pluralists) are opposed to any suggestion that interests might be unarticulated or unobservable, and above all, to the idea that people might actually be mistaken about or unaware of their own interests. Thus I conclude that this first, one-dimensional, view of power involves a focus on *behaviour* in the making of *decisions* on *issues* over which there is an observable *conflict* of (subjective) *interests*, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation."¹⁰⁵

In another work, J. Gaventa also subjects the one-dimensional view of power to criticism, since, *inter alia*, it fails to offer an adequate explanation for the non-participation in decision making of those groups who, despite, say, the harm done to their interests react passively, rather than actively engage in these social processes:

To make plausible inaction among those for whom the status quo is not comfortable, other explanations are provided for what appears 'irrational' or 'inefficient' behaviour. And, because the study of non-participation in this approach is sequestered by definition from the study of power, the explanations must generally be placed within the circumstance or culture of the non-participants themselves. The empirical relationship of low socio-economic status to low participation gets explained away as the apathy, political inefficiency, cynicism or alienation of the impoverished."¹⁰⁶

While Dahl and Polsby are primarily concerned with political decision-making processes and political decision-makers in America, from the viewpoint of political science, and Lukes and Gaventa focus upon a theoretical and empirical analysis of power in the context of political sociology, the discussion is germane to the study of social relationships in the British fishing industry, within a combined framework of industrial sociology and, to a lesser extent, the nascent discipline of maritime sociology. Where the former is concerned there has recently been much criticism of the long-established, and hitherto largely uncriticised, pluralist approach to the study of industrial relations and, more particularly, industrial conflict in Great Britain.¹⁰⁷

For example, J.H. Goldthorpe stated:

"While, then, there is much justification for the charge that the liberal-pluralist approach to industrial relations is managerialist in its priorities and conservative in its implications, there is also, it would seem, the danger that critics on the left may regard it too seriously as a threat to the freedom of action of industrial workers. For if the liberal-pluralist conception of a new order in industrial relations is ideology, it is also, in a sense, utopia."¹⁰⁸

Some of the pluralist theorists concerned with the examination of employment relationships within British industries have had an important influence, not only in the development of the academic discipline of industrial relations in the universities and polytechnics, but in the examinations of industrial-relations practices conducted

under the auspices and supervision of departments of state. For example, H.A. Clegg was a member of the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, appointed in April, 1965. A. Flanders submitted evidence to the Royal Commission and was later appointed a member of the Commission on Industrial Relations, which was created as a result of a recommendation of the Royal Commission and W.E.J. McCarthy was the Research Director for the Royal Commission. They have clearly had a pervasive influence on both the development of industrial relations as an academic discipline and in state policies.¹⁰⁹ Lukes and, to a similar extent, Gaventa provide us with a useful tool of critical analysis of the one-dimensional view of power. We can see, for example, that both Tunstall's and Duncan's accounts of employment relationships in the fishing industry have an unstructured - or one-dimensional - view of the industry's power relations. In a discussion of the two-dimensional view of power, Lukes acknowledges that it is in conceptual advance of the one-dimensional view. In his critique of the former, he constantly focussed upon the work of P. Bachrach and M.S. Baratz who claim that there are two important facets of power:

"Of course power is exercised when A participates in the making of decisions that affect B. Power is also exercised when A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A. To the extent that A succeeds in doing this, B is prevented, for all practical

purposes, from bringing to the fore any issues that might in their resolution be seriously detrimental to A's set of preferences."¹¹⁰

This represents a conceptual advance since it enables attention to be devoted to consideration of why some conflicting issues and groups are excluded altogether from the bargaining and negotiating processes.¹¹¹ The inference is that the powerful can determine or at least considerably influence which issues are to be allowed to surface into the public arena of decision-making. Bachrach and Baratz believe it is of the utmost significance to isolate and identify those potential issues which are prevented, by way of deliberate non-inclusion, from becoming tangible, indicating that their power is exercised in the determination of both decision-making and non-decision-making.

One weakness here is the stress that Bachrach and Baratz place upon the importance of conflict in power relations. However, they make an unwarranted assertion when they argue that if:

".....there is no conflict, overt or covert, the presumption must be that there is consensus on the prevailing allocation of values, in which case non decision-making is impossible."¹¹²

In the absence of conflict, they contend,

".....there is no way accurately to judge whether the thrust of a decision really is to thwart or prevent serious consideration of a demand for change that is potentially threatening to the decision-maker."¹¹³

As with the pluralists they criticise, Bachrach and Baratz view power in close and essential association with tangible, observable conflict and it is here that they expose a methodological weakness in the two-dimensional view of power.¹¹⁴ Power can be exercised over other groups through manipulation and the implementation of authority and here ideology plays - or can play - an important part. Further, power need not be defined, or characterised, by overt or covert conflict, for as Lukes argues:

".....(why the)insistence on actual and observable conflict will not do is simply that it is unsatisfactory to suppose that power is only exercised in situations of such conflict. To put the matter more clearly: A may exercise power over B by getting him to do what he does not want to do, but he also exercises power over him by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants. Indeed, is not the supreme exercise of power to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have - that is to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires? One does not have to go to the lengths of talking about *Brave New World*, or the world of B.F. Skinner to see this: thought control takes many less total more mundane forms through the control of information, through the mass media and through the process of socialisation."¹¹⁵

There are numerous empirical examples of the power being exercised in non conflict-ridden circumstances, e.g. the power of employers over a passive and unorganised labour force in, say, an area - and moment - of high unemployment rates. In such circumstances there may be little or no conflict between employers and employees but it would be untenable to argue that the balance of power

between the two groups was of little regard. One is here reminded of Lukes' criticism:

"The trouble seems to be that both Bachrach and Baratz and the pluralists suppose that because power, as they conceptualise it, only shows up in cases of actual conflict, it follows that actual conflict is necessary to power. But this is to ignore the crucial point that the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent such conflict from arising in the first place."¹¹⁶

What has to be considered here is that the absence of conflict, or the apparent dearth of grievances, does not constitute a consensual view of, say, the contractual relationship between employers and employees. Lukes comments:

".....is not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and performances in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they see it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial. To assume that the absence of grievance equals genuine consensus is simply to rule out the possibility of false or manipulated consensus by definitional fiat."¹¹⁷

Following his critique of the one-dimensional and two-dimensional views of power, Lukes offers an alternative definition of the concept of power:

"A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests."¹¹⁸

This definition implies a more thorough analysis of the means employed by A to bring about compliance with his interests, expectations and wishes. In this

relationship, conflict may be avoided since B's perception of his obligations to A may well have been shaped by processes that appear to be far removed from their interactions. In advancing the concept of power Lukes asserts:

"The three-dimensional view offers the possibility of such an analysis. It offers, in other words, the prospect of a serious sociological and not merely personalised explanation of how political systems prevent demands from becoming political issues or even from being made."¹¹⁹

Elsewhere, Lukes claims:

".....the one-dimensional view of power presupposes a liberal conception of interests, the two-dimensional view a reformist conception and the three-dimensional view a radical conception."¹²⁰

While one can criticise this view of power put forward by Lukes, it is at least a theoretical advance in the continuing analytical discussion of the concept of power. It appeared to the writer that such a conception of power could offer a theoretical framework for the analysis of those deemed virtually powerless in power relationships and that it ought to be tested empirically in order to assess its empirical applicability.

J. Gaventa appears to be of like mind when he states:

"Perhaps more significant, however, are the implications of this three-dimensional approach for an understanding of how power shapes participation patterns of the relatively powerless. In a sense, the separation by the pluralists of the notion of power from the phenomenon of quiescence has indicated the need for such a theory,

while in the second and third approaches are its beginnings. In the two-dimensional approach is the suggestion of barriers that prevent issues from emerging into political arenas - i.e. that constrains conflict. In the three-dimensional approach is the suggestion of the use of power to pre-empt manifest conflict at all, through the shaping of patterns or conceptions of non-conflict."¹²¹

The three-dimensional approach stipulates the need for an examination of these social processes, e.g. socialisation, legal systems, educational institutions, information control and dissemination, that help to structure social relationships. It reveals the inadequacy of numerous investigations of forms and institutions of collective bargaining within British industries.¹²² Many of these studies are too narrowly empirical in design and fail to isolate and explain the relationship between the distribution of power within an organisation and the social processes which tend to reinforce the *status quo*.¹²³

Quiescent acceptance of a widespread social and material inequality may be influenced by many social processes including the relationships between employers and employees. Whilst the power of the former may be legitimised in their own eyes by the predominant values of a capitalist society, the latter may not feel disposed to challenge either the inequalities or the values.

J. Westergaard and H. Resler make the following observation:

"It is taken for granted, 'in the way things work', that profit should be the normal yardstick of investment in most areas of activity; that the living standards of the propertyless majority should be set primarily by the terms on which they sell or once sold their labour."¹²⁴

There is an acceptance of social and economic inequality by many of those who are most deprived by it, as well as by those who enjoy the advantages of such social and material disparities. Ignorance is the handmaiden of the *status quo*. That is to say, that the inter-related growth of wealth and poverty in a nation, or between nations, does not automatically lead to hostility or conflict. Some structural-functionalists claim that people who suffer serious disadvantages will accept the 'injustice' of their placement in the social hierarchy if they do not perceive it as having been brought about by 'unfair' processes.

B. Barber, for example, asserted:

".....to the extent that the stratification system is an expression or result of differential ranking judgement in terms of some common set of values, it serves to integrate the society. Men have a sense of justice fulfilled and of virtue rewarded when they feel that they are fairly ranked as superior and inferior by the value of standards of their own moral community. This sense of justice is an important element in the integration of society."¹²⁵

Irrespective of the accuracy of this view of human perception and behaviour, the reality of power and its mechanisms for the containment, or abrogation, of conflicting issues still remain.¹²⁶

Gaventa argues that those without power may refuse to consider radical proposals for change but instead may be more susceptible to the perception of their world as it is presented to them by the more powerful. This will depend upon the degree of ignorance of the disadvantaged:

"The sense of powerlessness may also lead to a greater susceptibility to the internalisation of the values, beliefs or rules of the game of the powerful as a further adaptive response - i.e. as a means of escaping the subjective sense of powerlessness, if not its objective condition."¹²⁷

It may not be a case, says Gaventa, of the powerless accepting the fact of their powerlessness, of the powerful forces stacked against them, but that their consciousness is shaped by those social processes and institutions into an unquestioning acceptance of the *status quo*.¹²⁸ So ignorance can be at either the conscious or the subconscious level, or both. This, of course, is far removed from both the idea of 'false consciousness' and the objectively powerless group which subscribes to a radical, or even revolutionary, ideology but is forced by the circumstances in which it finds itself to compromise with those who hold more power, as argued by Rex.¹²⁹ It is just as likely, claims P. Freire, that the most deprived groups internalise the values that buttress the position of those more powerful, rather than develop a political or 'critical' consciousness.¹³⁰ Gaventa takes this argument further, thus:

".....the consciousness of the relatively powerless, even as it emerges, may be malleable, i.e. especially vulnerable to the manipulation of the power field around it. Through the invocation of myths or symbols, the use of threat or rumours or other mechanisms of power, the powerful may be able to ensure that certain beliefs and actions emerge in one context while apparently contradicting grievances may be expressed in others."¹³¹

Power relations can be understood in terms of their historical and societal framework, social dimensions, their durability and susceptibility to challenge. In other words, they are by their very nature dynamic, and may be changed by forces external to the social relationships of the powerful and the powerless. There are advantages in examining power relationships within the kind of framework postulated by Lukes¹³² and this research tries to acquire a better understanding of the circumstances surrounding the relationships between the fishermen and their employers, by utilising the three-dimensional view of power in order to assess the explanatory force of such a perspective and hence its empirical applicability. It is the writer's hope that this approach might be effective both for the research study itself and as a means of extending the discussion of a theory of power in the field of industrial relations and industrial sociology.¹³³

Two important questions now emerge. First, how useful is a detailed theory of power in obtaining a deeper understanding of the social reality of those engaged in an industry undergoing structural change and second, does it enable us to construct a methodological framework which leads to greater understanding of the behaviour of those we deem to be powerless via-a-vis other social groups? These questions largely determined the shape of this study both in terms of theory and methods.¹³⁴

In attempting to find answers to these questions, it was necessary to create a theoretical perspective which linked together the historical dimension and the social dimension. Thus, an historical approach is a contributory factor in any explanation of current circumstances and relationships between employers and fishermen in terms of the social dimension and its economic, social and political aspects.¹³⁵ The third dimension, a theoretical perspective of power, is important in the design of the study since it encourages a more distinct focussing upon both the apparent acceptance of powerlessness and the attempts made by some to alter the balance of power between the fishermen and their employers.¹³⁶

Gaventa has followed a somewhat similar theoretical and methodological approach in his study of the power relations between an Amercian community of coal-miners and their families, and their employers and landlords, a British mining company which, at the time of his study, was part-owned by a former Lord Mayor of London.¹³⁷ Inevitably there are differences between the two studies since Gaventa is concerned not only with the system of collective bargaining that evolved with the emergence of trade unionism amongst the coal-miners but with local politics and 'community protest',¹³⁸ whereas this thesis is concerned with the need to place an empirical examination of the fishing industry in the context of the relationships between state, capital and labour, an approach which involves, *inter alia* a critical examination

of the unevenness in the distribution of power between the three institutions.¹³⁹ Despite the divergences between the two studies, there remain similarities and parallels in the approaches adopted and these will be discussed where appropriate.

In summary, then, the analysis of social relationships in terms of the concept of power is fundamental to this thesis. 'Power' is here interpreted as a social process which involves the differential distribution of control over and access to resources, rewards and sanctions which are material, tangible and ideological. By 'ideology' is meant a socially produced cluster of ideas and beliefs, which are used directly and indirectly to justify, buttress or enhance, as appropriate, the position of individuals or groups relative to other individuals or groups.¹⁴⁰ This concept of power focusses upon the ability of individuals or groups to determine the basis upon which decisions are to be made and courses of action followed even when decisions, actions and objectives are incompatible with the interests of others and in spite of hostility or resistance when offered by those others.

Specifically, it is hypothesised that the much-noted conservatism of the British fishing industry cannot be properly understood without reference to the way in which power, ideological and social processes shape the interactions in the industry. It will be argued that what is needed is a broader, more critical perspective than that which has hitherto been adopted by those who have sought to analyse the industry.¹⁴¹ One cannot,

for example, understand industrial relations in the industry, merely by analysing the day-to-day interactions between crew members of fishing vessels and their relationships with onshore management and trade union representatives. One must examine these interactions within a context which considers, *inter alia*, (1) the overall pattern of ownership and control in this sector of the industry, (2) the emergence of trade unionism, trade union policies and activities, trade union conceptions of procedures for bargaining and grievances, trade union challenges to the power of the employers and the state, (3) further significant interactions with the state, other nation states and supra-national bodies such as the EEC.¹⁴²

In short, throughout the thesis a sustained attempt is made to locate changes in the fishing industry within a theoretical framework which identifies the relationship between state, capital and labour as decisive.¹⁴³ However, this analysis is separate from, and, in many ways, different from the kind exemplified by the modern historian, R.K. Middlemas, in his recent text, "*The Politics of an Industrial Society*".¹⁴⁴ Middlemas' analysis is labelled by some as corporatist but might more accurately be called tri-partite pluralist, of which it is a minor modification. What are considered to be flaws in Middlemas' perspective will be demonstrated at both the general and specific levels.

Middlemas argues that organised labour has joined capital and the state to become a "joint ruling institution" in an advanced capitalist society.¹⁴⁵ Since the degree of equality among the three varies from one "joint ruling institution" or industry to another, this generalisation is of little practical help in any specific case, including that of the fishing industry.¹⁴⁶ Even although the fishermen, who are at the centre of the thesis, are represented by the largest trade union in the United Kingdom, this nationally-based organisation is confronted not just by nationally based institutions representing capital and the state but also, by large transnational entities.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, the power of capital is effectively reinforced by maritime labour legislation which gives the employers a considerable advantage over their employees.¹⁴⁸

Contrary to what Middlemas implies, labour does not benefit as an equal from the tri-partite relationship with capital and the state. The state and capital tend to exercise something approaching joint hegemony with respect to the strategic decision-making in the fishing industry.¹⁴⁹ This, the thesis argues is illustrated by the similarities between the views of government ministers, state officials and trawler owners on the issue of the demands made by the trade union for the 'de-casualisation' of the employment of fishermen; this is the case, it will be contended, whether there is a Labour or a Conservative government in office.¹⁵⁰ The hypothesis here is that the neutrality displayed by cabinet ministers

and state officials enhanced the power of the employers and weakened the probability of the trade union demands coming to fruition.¹⁵¹ The assertion is made here that officials of state departments associated with fishing appear to be more favourably disposed to fishing vessel owners than to those who are employed in the sea-going labour force. The intention is to substantiate this assertion in later chapters.

In the case of important decisions, the pre-determined rules place labour at a major disadvantage.¹⁵² The interpretation of the triangular relationship as manifested within the British fishing industry is contrasted with the one and two-dimensional views of power relations and with Middlemas' pluralist perspective of the trade union wielding as much power as capital and the state.¹⁵³

2.4 Research Methods Employed in the Study

This section discusses the research methods and strategies employed in the study. Emphasis has been placed on an overall methodological strategy which utilises a combination of research methods rather than just one.¹⁵⁴ The research strategy is influenced by the study's theoretical commitments,¹⁵⁵ namely a perspective which views the fishing industry as a complex, multi-faceted process with on the one hand, its own

distinctiveness, and, on the other, numerous connections with broader industrial, economic, social and political processes.¹⁵⁶ In the past a narrowness in perspective and fixity upon distinctiveness have obstructed the analysis of important inter-connections and inter-dependencies between the development of fishing as an industry and other industries.¹⁵⁷

Clearly, a multi-faceted process requires a multi-faceted methodology for analytical purposes. This is especially so in the area of power relationships which cannot be effectively examined solely by standard empirical methods.¹⁵⁸ For example, the investigation of non-decision making involves the awareness and analysis of latent conflicts, e.g. conflicts and grievances which apparently are not empirically visible. The analysis which was required in this research was necessarily broader than a purely empirical investigation.¹⁵⁹ It required considerable previous experience of this sector of the industry, including certain aspects of the employment relationship between trawler crews and their employers, compared with other employment relationships co-existing in trawler-companies involving personnel in onshore work.¹⁶⁰ In addition a period of cogitation was necessary before attempting to draw up a research strategy. A.W. Gouldner recommends this preliminary deliberation concerning formulation of strategy:

.....what he (the sociologist) should do first, and do with careful thoroughness, is to think about the thing and to talk with colleagues and comrades. Higher and prior to research there is reflection. The sociologist should first conduct a dialogue with himself and with others to see what he already knows-believes about the matter at issue and then critically evaluate the results this produces."¹⁶¹

Following careful reflection on the question of research methods, the writer decided that conventional social survey research techniques would be wholly inappropriate to a study of this kind.¹⁶² While numerous social scientific research investigators use lengthy questionnaires,¹⁶³ often on the grounds of economy and breadth of coverage, the writer considers that this approach may provide unreliable accounts of people's behaviour.¹⁶⁴ D.L. Phillips is critical of social surveys which incorporate the administration of questionnaires:

"Since sociology is variously defined as the study (or 'science') of 'interaction', 'human relationships', 'human behavior', or 'social processes', one might expect that the principal modes of data collection would involve the actual observation of behavior and interaction. As we all know, this is not the case. For sociological researchers to a large extent rely on those people who are the objects of their investigations to report their own behavior."¹⁶⁵

Administering questionnaires by face-to-face contact, or by way of postal surveys, and conducting interviews, are surrounded by methodological problems of one sort or another:

"If, as most sociologists assume, people's behaviour is partially a product of their needs, values, and expectations, it is not surprising that their behaviour (responses)

in interview situations will also be affected by these factors."166

Few psychologists or psychiatrists would dispute this statement of Phillips who conducted an investigation of the effects of response determinants and biases in social surveys. He claimed, on the basis of his findings:

".....despite the fact that we follow the usual precautions (assuring anonymity, stressing that there are no right or wrong answers, and so on) for eliminating the possible effects of desirability factors, our respondents were.....very much affected by considerations of social desirability. It might be of course that had we not followed these precautionary procedures, the relationships between the two measures of social desirability (trait desirability and need for approval) and people's responses on the various items would have been even stronger. Whether or not this could happen, our data indicate quite clearly that taking the usual 'precautions' will not eliminate the influence of people's desire to place themselves in a favourable light on many measures of interest to sociological investigators."167

Among those who object to the severity of the criticism levelled by D. Phillips and others against conventional survey research techniques, C. Bell and H. Newby, for example, contend:

".....many alternatives to conventional survey research are no less positivistic; facts are still facts and they are still there to be described, but perhaps with less reliance on, say, numerical measurement. Of course, there are some who would argue that the second and more radical assault on positivism is, despite its pretensions to be otherwise, just as positivistic as old-style positivism."168

This is a weak, defensive argument, apart from its circularity. If we are concerned with obtaining, say, factual information of a demographic nature, then a

social survey may be usefully employed as an element of the research methods.¹⁶⁹ Elsewhere in the same text, Newby, in a discussion of his study of English farmworkers, argues a defensive case for the use of a social survey in an area that is, in his view, under-researched:

"After due consideration.....I decided to use a survey method. I was distrustful of the impressionistic and unreliable nature of participant observation and the inability which it presented of talking to more than a handful of farmworkers in what would inevitably be a somewhat arbitrarily selected location. But what really convinced me of the need to conduct a survey was the complete absence of any sociological data - in some cases of even the most elementary sociographic kind - which could present a backdrop to the kind of in-depth exploration which participant observation would entail. I therefore set about drawing up a sample for a survey and designing a questionnaire."¹⁷⁰

One can contrast and compare this approach to the study of agricultural workers with the documented research work carried out by I. Carter, a sociologist at the University of Aberdeen, on farmworkers in north-east Scotland, a study very much in the field of historical sociology and apparently widely admired by historians and sociologists.¹⁷¹

C. Wright-Mills was also critical of social surveys and research interviews:

".....in practice, the more or less set interview - the basic source of information - usually requires a curious sort of social behaviourism. Given the administrative and financial facts of research, this is almost inevitable. For is it not obvious that interviewers at best

semi-skilled cannot obtain - in fact, no one regardless of skill can obtain - in a twenty minute or even a day-long interview the kinds of depth materials which we know, from the most skilled and prolonged interviews, are there to be gotten? Nor is it possible to obtain by the usual sort of sample survey the kind of information on structure which we know is available from studies properly orientated to history."¹⁷²

Given the theoretical orientation of this study, documents of one kind or another formed a major primary source of information. The Webbs, on the basis of their earlier research work, recommended documents, personal observation and interviews as effective instruments of research discovery.¹⁷³ (The researcher has taken note of the many criticisms surrounding the research interview; he himself conducted numerous interviews in his study¹⁷⁴). Regarding documents many problems surround their use as primary source material;¹⁷⁵ however, they are used by both historians and sociologists in order to explain events and processes. For the former, they are of prime importance as a source of data. G. Kitson Clark has observed:

"Documents in official archives are necessarily one of the main..... sources of information for the historian."¹⁷⁶

Nevertheless documents have to be treated with scepticism. E.H. Carr observes:

"But what when we get down to it, do these documents - the decrees, the treaties, the rent-rolls, the blue books, the official correspondence, the private letters and diaries - tell us? No document can tell us more than what the author of the document thought -

what he thought had happened or perhaps only what he wanted others to think he thought, or even only what he himself thought he thought."177

Information can be missing from documents, or misleading, biased, or again, given that the interests of the author, or authors, may be entirely different from those of the particular research worker, the information may be totally irrelevant. A.V. Cicourel writes:

"Historical and contemporary non-scientific materials contain built-in biases and the researcher generally has no access to the setting in which they were produced; the meanings intended by the producer of the document and the cultural circumstances surrounding its assembly are not always subject to manipulation and control."178

To some extent the research worker, examining documents or records, finds himself in an analogous position to the social surveyor administering a questionnaire, in that the document or record under scrutiny is an account, or interpretation, of an event or condition of affairs.¹⁷⁹ S. Raffel in his text on the methodology of records, warns of the dangers of honest bias:

"Bias, of course, is not just the simple matter of outright dishonesty. As most writers on the topic see it, there are also more subtle dangers inherent in the use of records than the possibility that the records may present only a one-sided view of the events they purport to describe."180

Records, then, can be seen as interpretations of events and circumstances but they can also be seen as a means by which the social world is given shape or meaning by the recorders. This, for both historians and historical sociologists, presents a fundamental methodological problem.

It may well be the case that the recorder may no longer be available for cross-examination of his interpretation of events. For many research workers that is a condition of affairs that has to be accepted. The epistemological problem that remains almost intractable is outlined by Raffel:

".....the grounds which make it seem reasonable to write records determine in advance both the characteristics of actual records and of the 'real world' as it will appear to record-writers. It is not that records record things but that the very idea of recording determines in advance how things will have to appear. A record is a way of giving evidence, and a way of giving evidence is to record what one witnesses."¹⁸¹

So the witnesses, or at any rate, their evidence should be treated with caution but that ought not to deter the research worker. He or she is working in a field of human frailties, intangibles and imponderables.¹⁸² All kinds of scholars have acknowledged this difficulty. The Russian poet, Anna Akhmatova, once commented:

"Every attempt to produce coherent memories amounts to falsification. No human memory is so arranged as to recollect everything in continuous sequence. Letters and diaries often turn out to be bad assistants."¹⁸³

'Bad assistants' or not the present study has had to resort to many kinds of documents, records and statistical tables. To reject the analysis of these data would be to adopt the position of some sociologists.¹⁸⁴ Official statistics need to be examined in economic, historical and sociological studies, including the present one. This is entirely acceptable, so long as they are seen as

the product of the circumstances and perceptions of those who produced them. In an important sense they can be regarded as socially biased artefacts.

B. Hindess observed:

".....like all knowledge, official statistics must be analysed as a product. They are never mere givens to be taken as they are or else dismissed as inadequate. Like all products they must be examined in terms of the conditions and instruments of their production."¹⁸⁵

Despite this qualification, a study such as this needs to examine and use where appropriate, numerous statistical tables that can be obtained only from official sources, e.g. departments of state. Records are fallible accounts of processes which include estimates, made by their producers, of what were perceived to be important variables. The production and keeping of records form a socially organised process which can be analysed by the researcher in order to gain a better understanding of the issues which the producers seek to record and he seeks to examine.¹⁸⁶

The method of enquiry known as participant observation has also been heavily criticised by sociologists and other professionals.¹⁸⁷ It has been dismissed by some sociologists and psychologists as unreliable and as a means by which impressionistic accounts of human behaviour and social processes are generated. M. Dalton warns of the effects the participant observer may have on what is observed:

"(The observer's) presence may disturb the very situation he is seeking to freeze for study."¹⁸⁸

In psychology, this is known as the 'experimenter effect' and it is an important variable in numerous experimental psychological laboratory studies.¹⁸⁹ Despite its problems, the method of participant observation can elicit much useful information which might either escape a questionnaire or require an exhaustive number of interviews. P. Worsley recommends its use in research:

"Some of the difficulties arising out of the use of interviewing in sociological data-collection can be overcome by combining observation with interviewing, or perhaps by using observation alone. The rationale behind the use of observations in sociological research is that the sociologist should become party to a set of social actions sufficiently to be able to assess directly the social relationships involved. The degree of involvement may vary considerably from being merely a watcher on the side lines to being deeply involved and part of what is going on."¹⁹⁰

One of the major problems associated with observation is that of gaining access to an organisation or groups of people. This, of course, is part of the larger problem for the sociologist of getting past the gatekeepers in order to tap the data. J. Friedrichs and H. Lüdtkke, write:

"Participant observation requires an initial stranger to take a role which is accepted by the members of the observation field. The better the strategic position of the observer's role, i.e. a role which provides the least limited entrée to relevant situations and which causes the fewest changes in the field, the easier it is to secure relevant information."¹⁹¹

However, these two writers go on to argue that in order to enhance the validity, reliability and comparability

of the information, pre-tests *inter alia* should be carried out before the commencement of the research study.¹⁹² This requirement is in many cases somewhat idealistic and quite beyond the means of many of those engaged in research.

Once access has been gained to an organisation or social group, there is the danger that the observer may not be able to maintain a detached disinterestedness vis-à-vis those he or she is seeking to observe. A classic account of the problem of the participating observer is provided by W.F. Whyte who made a study of an Italian 'street-corner gang' in Boston, U.S.A., in the nineteen-thirties.¹⁹³ The leader of the gang 'Doc' became Whyte's mentor, who learned to speak Italian and participated in many of the gang's activities. The members of the gang were aware that Whyte was 'writing a book' about the neighbourhood and showed him considerable amity. However, that was a problem for Whyte since he found that he was more of a participator in the gang than an observer of it.¹⁹⁴

Some have advocated the subterfuge of covert observation, namely concealing from those whom the research worker seeks to observe, the nature of his or her presence but this kind of approach is ethically questionable.¹⁹⁵ P. Worsley calls for an honest, open approach (even if, as sometimes happens, the research worker is barred by the gatekeeper):

"One of the advantages of an overt as against a covert participant-observer status is that the observer is able to ask for certain obscure aspects of behaviour to be explained to him.

The people who have accepted him into their midst acknowledge his observer role, as well as any other role that he may have taken. Though he may never be fully accepted into the group, therefore, he does have certain rights and a certain special degree of freedom at the same time."¹⁹⁶

Participant observation is perhaps best understood as a method of research for determining the processes of social interactions in their natural setting.¹⁹⁷ One is here reminded of the complaint made by J. Madge:

"Some social scientists will do any mad thing rather than study men at first hand in their natural surroundings."¹⁹⁸

Since every environment and every research study is in some ways unique it is scarcely worthwhile to debate the superiority of one method over others. Participant observation is utilised in the study along with other closely related empirical social research methods. Fully seventy years ago the Webbs commended:

".....three good instruments of (research) discovery: the document, personal observation and the interview."¹⁹⁹

The research methods employed in a research study are in any case governed to some extent by its theoretical perspective and methodological framework. Another important determinant, however, is the relationship between the researcher, his or her study and his or her audience. This last factor of audience is very important. D.N. Phillips writes:

".....we might try to direct our arguments to an audience larger than or different from that constituted by the community of sociologists - thus hopefully, minimising the extent to which we are bound by method. In

presenting his arguments, the writer depends not so much on correct method as on providing reasons for his judgements. Whereas his explanation of the behaviour of those he is writing about involves his attributing certain reasons (motives, purposes and so on) to them, in his presentation to an audience he has to claim certain reasons for *himself* as supporting his explanations."²⁰⁰

This particular study employs three empirical social research methods, namely (a) participant observation of certain groups of people who are central to the study's theoretical perspective; (b) a series of interviews with people operating within the area of the research enterprise; and (c) the qualitative analysis of contemporary and historical documents, records, statistical tables, newspaper and periodicals relating to the British fishermen, their trade unions, employers and the British state.²⁰¹ However, the analysis itself is necessarily broader than a purely empirical investigation,²⁰² and the whole is shaped to a major extent by its theoretical perspective, with the empirical methods serving, as it were, as the tools for inspection.

2.5 Access to Organisations and Groups²⁰³

One important point must be made here concerning the selection of primary sources. It follows from the research objectives, research ideas and the theoretical stance adopted in the research that much of the empirical research and analysis of primary source-material necessarily

meant seeking the co-operation of groups of employees and the trade unions representing their interests; at the same time in light of the widespread criticisms of 'managerial bias' in much of industrial sociology and industrial psychology, it was decided to refrain from seeking the active co-operation of the employers.²⁰⁴

G. Bamber made a similar decision in his study of managerial trade unionism:

".....in view of influential criticisms in the past about the treatment of unionism in "managerial sociology", the author began with a predisposition to seek primary research access from the union side if possible, rather than from employers."²⁰⁵

Of course, it was neither possible, nor desirable, in this study to refrain completely from making contacts with some vessel-owners and their shore-based managers. Some approaches had to be made to managers for sound practical reasons. For example, the researcher signed ship's articles as a supernumerary crew-member of an Aberdeen trawler which involved an interview with the company's trawler-crews manager. This interview was arranged through local trade union officials who were present at the interview with the manager.²⁰⁶ Elsewhere the researcher was refused access to joint management/trade union meetings by trawler-company directors even although the trade union officials and lay-representatives offered no objections to his presence at such meetings. The researcher can only hope that this refusal to co-operate did not materially affect the study.²⁰⁷

2.6 i Access to Trade Union Members, Meetings and Contemporary and Historical Documents

Following the formulation of the research objectives, a review of the literature and lengthy reflection over the empirical applicability of Lukes' theory of power to this sector of the fishing industry, an interview was obtained in November 1976 with D.K. Cairns, the then Regional Secretary of Number 10 Region of the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Union's then National Fishing Liaison Officer.²⁰⁸ He was given an outline of the research proposals and, after some reflection, agreed to co-operate fully with the researcher who was subsequently introduced to those full-time officials whose responsibilities included representing the members in the industry; they also promised their active co-operation.

After several meetings with the National Officer and his officials, the researcher was introduced to a number of fishermen's branch chairmen and secretaries who also co-operated by allowing him to attend meetings and study branch minutes-books and other documents. For one and a half years the researcher attended the monthly meeting in Aberdeen of the local fishermen's branch of the union, (7/146 Branch of the T & GWU)²⁰⁹ as well as occasional meetings in Hull and Grimsby.²¹⁰ The researcher also attended the annual conference of the fishing industry section of the T & GWU in the years 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1980.²¹¹ In addition, through the co-operation of branch secretaries, some 87 fishermen and 30 former fishermen were interviewed in the three ports of

Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull.²¹² Some 17 trawler skippers and mates, most of whom were not members of the T & GWU at that time, were also interviewed in Aberdeen and Hull, sometimes with the assistance of the local T & GWU officials or lay-representatives.²¹³ It need hardly be said that this comprehensive co-operation was invaluable.

Apart from working alongside the trawler-crews, the researcher was able to converse with the fishermen during meal breaks, rest periods and in moments of 'slack fishing',²¹⁴ and between shooting and hauling the gear.²¹⁵ The intention at such moments, was to attempt to elicit from the fishermen their views on their occupation, their working conditions and environment, and their social relationships with others, both on board the vessel and ashore. For deck crews this would include their attitudes towards engineers.²¹⁶ Similarly, an attempt was made to gain an understanding of the way in which relationships were viewed and structured with significant others in onshore activities, e.g. company managers, other company employees and trades union officials. The fishermen's perceptions of such issues as security of employment, trade unionism, industrial action and the T & GWU policy concerning 'de-casualisation' were also sought by the researcher.

The use of a questionnaire or interview schedule was rejected in favour of a series of structured conversations. Here, of course, the researcher came up against the fishermen's 'construction of reality'. J.P. Dean and W.F. Whyte state:

The informant's statement represents merely the perception of the informant, filtered and modified by his cognitive and emotional reactions and reported through his personal usage.²¹⁷

It is true, of course, that each individual's interpretation of events is affected both by his perception of the events and by the circumstances at the time he is being interviewed;²¹⁸ but it was an important task of the research to try to enter the perceptual world of the fishermen and to do so, as far as possible, in operational circumstances. All things considered, the procedure adopted was probably the nearest the researcher could get to *in situ* monitoring in a continuing situation. So when he retired to his berth, or after he left a branch meeting, or an interview with a fisherman, the researcher noted down his thoughts and observations whilst the matter was still fresh in his mind.²¹⁹

In all these activities at sea or ashore, the researcher obtained the fullest co-operation from all concerned but at all meetings, whether on ship or on shore, he was obliged to explain his presence. Also, given the empirical investigation, it became almost impossible to distinguish precisely between the researcher's observation and participant observation.²²⁰

The active co-operation of the trade union officials is evidenced by the invitation, given by the National Fishing Officer, to the researcher to accompany delegations to the Houses of Parliament and to meetings with officials of three departments of state closely involved in the

fishing industry, namely the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Department of Trade (Maritime Division) and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland. The researcher also accompanied trade union officials on a number of visits to the offices of the EEC in Brussels to meet EEC officials who were concerned with the operations of the Community's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and with negotiations of reciprocal fisheries agreements with North Atlantic fishing nations outwith the EEC. Here again the researcher was involved in observation and participant observation.

When the fieldwork was completed, the researcher accepted an invitation by the National Fishing Officer to undertake the role of research assistant (unpaid) and to act both as a trade - union nominated educational member of the Sea Fisheries Training Council²²¹ and as an assistant (research) to him on the Department of Trade (Maritime Division) Working Party on the Occupational Safety of Fishermen.²²² Another invitation was accepted to sit as a member of the EEC's Directorate-General of Social Affairs' Joint Committee on Social Conditions in Sea Fishing.²²³

Sitting on these committees provided a useful opportunity to observe the social relationships and interactions between the state, the employers and labour, in terms of the theory of power relations, and to study at first hand the distribution of power within the union itself, namely between officials, lay-representatives

and the sea-going membership.²²⁴ W.F. Whyte's warning anent the dangers of becoming a participator rather than remaining an observer was kept in mind.²²⁵ Other research students and workers have had to face this problem. G. Bamber, for example, in his study of the Steel Industry Management Association (SIMA) writes:

"After the completion of (the) phase of non-participant observation, the author worked as a full-time official of SIMA for four years. In this capacity he took part in meetings at all levels of SIMA's government and participated in negotiating and consultative meetings between SIMA and employers. To some extent this participation may have lessened the author's objectivity. Nevertheless, it also enriched the appreciation of subtler points about SIMA's history, development and policies."²²⁶

Some orthodox methodologists, e.g. J. Friedrichs and H. Ludtke, might not approve of Bamber's role in the trade union he set out to examine but the researcher would side with Bamber in that it enabled him to analyse, in depth and at first hand, industrial relations and collective bargaining procedures in the British steel industry. Bamber's comment on his 'objectivity' must, of course, be treated with caution.²²⁷ Regarding the present study, the researcher was encouraged by his supervisor Dr. D. McPherson, to accept the various invitations already mentioned.

2.4ii Interviews

Many interviews were conducted with working, unemployed and retired fishermen, with some skippers and with a small number of managers. The researcher's opinion was that a series of interviews with trawler-company directors would not prove very fruitful.²²⁸ He considered that being able to observe employers' representatives (in some instances of company director status) in joint meetings with trade union officials and representatives and state officials in Britain as well as in the headquarters of the EEC would elicit useful insights into their relations with and attitudes towards their sea-going labour force.

A number of officials from departments of state were also interviewed as well as several senior EEC officials connected with the EEC's fishing industries. Whilst in Brussels, the researcher interviewed a small number of trade union officials representing fishermen in member-states of the EEC and the countries of Norway, Faroe and Spain.²²⁹ These interviews were used, as was the short questionnaire previously mentioned, to obtain comparative evidence concerning trade unionism among fishermen of other nations in western and northern Europe. The information obtained was somewhat exiguous and had little bearing upon the main theoretical thrust of the study.²³⁰

The attempt was made to fit the interviews in with the methods of observation and participant observation

in terms of a complementary application within the broad framework of the study,²³¹ i.e. the researcher, during the empirical field-work, took on the role of observer-interviewer. Interviews were often used to try to uncover the rationale for decisions and forms of behaviour and to dispel perplexities that had formed in the researcher's mind concerning work practices, attitudes to management, to fellow-workers, and so on. In this sense observation and interviews became complementary research tools with simultaneous application.²³²

Answers, explanations and attitudes elicited in the interviews conducted in the study were treated with some caution. For example, a number of skippers, managers and state officials pointed out, in interviews, and with noticeable agreement, that the vast majority of trawler-company employed fishermen did not want increased security of employment, that they were happy with the casual system of employment and sought no changes in that respect. As will be shown later this was not the view of many of the fishermen when researched and interviewed.²³³ This subjective view of the fishermen did accord, however, with the romantic image of the fishermen and the ideological and power factors which help to shape the relationship of employers and employees.

Apart from the desire to protect one's own interests in interviews, people's reactions and responses are likely to be influenced by their assessment of the interviewer,

the question to be answered, and their felt need for social approval, i.e. people may wish to meet with approval and not disapproval.²³⁴ For this reason the social survey approach was in the main avoided during interviews.²³⁵ Nevertheless the interviews were an important method of investigation which interlocked with other methods and helped to explain numerous issues that at first caused deep perplexity.

2.4iii Documents and Records

Like the Webbs, who believed that documents were, for the research worker, a supremely important instrument of discovery,²³⁶ the author had recourse to all kinds of documents and records. Trade union documents were made readily available including the minutes books of the 7/146 T & GWU branch of Aberdeen Fishermen,²³⁷ the minutes books dating back to 1900 of a Grimsby trawler engineers' and firemen's trade union;²³⁸ trade union correspondence of a routine nature; and correspondence concerning cabinet ministers, members of parliament and state officials.²³⁹ Copies of employment agreements were also made available to the researcher²⁴⁰ as well as memoranda anent negotiating and bargaining issues and tactics²⁴¹. In addition to attending meetings of trade union officials concerned with the trade union's policy of de-casualisation the researcher received copies of the trade union's policy documents on that issue.²⁴²

G. Bamber in his study states:

"SIMA's full-time officials agreed to supply a copy of all memoranda, routine correspondence, collective agreements, newsletters, minutes of meetings and the usual documentation which is distributed to members and officers, except that classified as 'secret', which often dealt with inter-union relations. They supplied a copy of their filing index and offered access to all records and documents including the 'secret' ones; this availability of reliable documentary sources was invaluable. ²⁴³

In both cases, Bamber's and the author's, the level of co-operation received was of the highest and, it would appear from the research literature, quite unusual.

Other trade union documents and records concerning the catching section of the industry were consulted in the Library of the University of Aberdeen,²⁴⁴ the Mitchell Library in Glasgow,²⁴⁵ the Hull Public Library and the Grimsby Public Library. Some time was spent on examining the relevant material contained in the Webb Collection of Trades Union Documents which is kept in the library of the London School of Economics.²⁴⁶ The National Library of Scotland contributed some useful documents for examination.

In tracing some of these documents, the writer received invaluable assistance from I. McDougall's *Labour Records in Scotland*.²⁴⁷ These sources were an important aid in the understanding of the emergence of trade unionism among fishermen and hence to the historical dimension of the study.

Official reports were consulted in the Scottish Records Office in Edinburgh and in the Public Records Office in London. More recent state reports were obtained from

officials at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, London; the Department of Trade, London; the Scottish Office, Edinburgh; the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland, Edinburgh; the White Fish Authority, Edinburgh; and the Herring Industry Board, Edinburgh. Other reports concerning the British fishing industry, and the fishing industries of member-states, were obtained from officials employed by the Directorate-General for Social Affairs of the EEC.

A small number of documents were acquired from trade unions representing fishermen, in Norway, Canada, Iceland, Faroe, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and Spain. These documents were generally concerned with terms and conditions of employment, collective bargaining rights of trade unions, numbers of fishermen in the respective trade unions and so on. Whilst they were of some interest, in terms of providing comparative information, they were not of crucial significance.²⁴⁸ In addition to these documents, the author received documents (concerning conditions of employment of fishermen together with recommendations for changes in rest periods, holidays, etc.) from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITWF).²⁴⁹

Various newspapers and periodical newspapers were scrutinised. Some of these have already been quoted and discussed in Chapter One but others which have long ceased publication were consulted for historical information in order to see how they reported upon the

events and circumstances surrounding the fishermen in the trawler companies. This task inevitably involved the reading of extant trade newspapers, e.g. '*Fishing News*' as well as regional newspapers, e.g. the '*Aberdeen Press and Journal*', the '*Hull Daily Mail*', and the '*Grimsby Evening Telegraph*'. These, too, provided useful information and underlined the importance to modern historians of newspapers, as emphasised by Lord Asa Briggs.²⁵⁰

Various publications produced on behalf of vessel-owners' associations in Scottish and English fishing ports were also consulted.²⁵¹ These publications, along with many of the documents issued by departments of state and the trades unions, have to be treated with circumspection on the grounds of bias and distortion and because they seek to protect and promote sectional interests. One has to consider not only what they say but what they choose to omit.²⁵² Finally, the social scientific investigator must try, so far as possible, to be aware of, and take account of his own biases, preconceived expectations and values.²⁵³

In summary, the writer chose to apply the complementary methods of observation, participant observation, interviews where deemed appropriate, and the examination of historical and contemporary documents and records concerning the British fishing industry. It was his hope that each would strengthen the other as regards methodological concern, theoretical perspective and eclectic overview.

REFERENCES

1. J. Tunstall, *'The Fishermen: The Sociology of an Extreme Occupation'*, MacGibbon and Kee, London 1969.
2. Godfrey and Godman argue, *op.cit.* that the fishing industry is still of considerable regional importance in numerous small communities in the British Isles.
3. This is essentially J. Rex's criticism of much of sociological analysis of capitalist modes of production. *Op.cit.* Chapters 1, 2 and 3.
4. J.G. Suttinen, *'Fishermen's Remuneration Systems and Implications for Fisheries Development'*, *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, Vol.26, No.2, June 1979, p.147.
5. *ibid.* p.148.
6. Suttinen here ignores the question of this form of work incentive being utilised to persuade men to work in unsafe weather conditions. For a detailed discussion of payment systems and industrial conflict surrounding them see Chapter 5.
7. The two systems of remuneration are not mutually exclusive, e.g. some crews employed by smaller trawler companies receive a percentage share of the sales but, unlike many of those employed in the inshore sector, they receive a fall-back guarantee.
8. See Appendix 4, p.586, *'Agreement: The Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association and The Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineer's and Firemen's Union'*, dated 27th November, 1899".
9. Quoted in J. Rex, *op.cit.* p.123.
10. *ibid.* p.123
11. *'Social Action Programme in Sea Fishing in the European Communities'*, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, Commission of the European Communities, V/488/1/80-EN, Brussels, 28 July, 1980, p.22.

12. H. Newby, a sociologist, has made a similar criticism of the approach of agricultural economists to the earnings of agricultural workers in Britain.

"It occurred to me that the economists' arguments were perpetuating the myths put about by many farmers about farm wages. Stripped of its academic jargon, the economists were concurring with the view that farm wages were low because farmers could not afford to pay more.....Here there seemed to be a group of academics to whom farm workers and their representatives ought to be able to look for independent judgement but who had been captured by their main informants (and, as I was later to judge, main clients): namely the farmers' lobby. I looked upon them as tied economists."

H. Newby, *'Reflections on the Study of Suffolk Farm Workers' in doing Sociological Research'*, edited by C. Bell and H. Newby, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1977, p.111.

13. *'North Atlantic Fishermen: Anthropological Essays on Modern Fishing'*, Editors: R. Andersen and C. Wadel, University of Toronto Press, Canada, 1972.
14. R. Andersen, *'Hunt and Deceive: Information Management in Newfoundland Deep-Sea Trawler Fishing'*, op.cit., pp.120-140. It has, of course, to be remembered that many influential sociological text books do not give these social processes the comprehensive debate they warrant. In addition, the author is mindful of the fact that numerous sociologists have disregarded, in their surveys of society, such endemic social factors of conflict, instability, strain and change. Other sociologists are rightly critical of this kind of astigmatic sociology: Nowhere is this remoteness from the real world of action more evident than in *'Social Theory and Modern Society'* (by Professor Talcott Parsons). "One of the oddest characteristics of the book is that it does not seem to be about modern society at all, in any serious way. Science, industry, population growth, starvation, revolution, race prejudice, and conflict, nuclear war, are either not mentioned or get only the most fleeting attention. The events and issues which agitate, confuse, infuriate, or frighten men in present-day society, which engender revolt and repression, are left out of account". T.B. Bottomore, *'Sociology as Social Criticism'*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1975, p.43

15. A survey of the literature on the industry in other languages was beyond the scope of the present study.

16. R. Andersen, *op.cit.* pp.120-140.
17. J. Irvine, I. Miles and J. Evans, *'Demystifying Social Statistics'*, Pluto Press, London, 1979.
18. G.W. Horobin, *'Community and Occupation in the Hull Fishing Industry'*, *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol.8, 1957, pp.343-356.
19. *ibid.* p.343
20. *ibid.* p.348
21. *ibid.* p.343 (*italics added*, Author)
22. The population of Hull in 1951 was 275,000. By 1968 Hull was still a thriving distant-water fishing port, the Hessle Road area, described by Horobin as the 'fishing area' had undergone wide-spread physical change with many of its residents having moved to housing estates on the periphery of the city.
23. J.S. Kitchen, *'The Employment of Merchant Seamen'*, Croom Helm, London, 1980.
24. The fishing industry is of a considerable importance as an employer of labour in a number of other cities and regions of the British Isles, e.g. Aberdeen, Fleetwood, Grimsby, North Shields, the Grampian Region, the Western Isles and the Shetland Islands.
25. See J. Rex, *op.cit.* p.131.
26. P. Duncan, *'Conflict and Co-operation among Trawlermen'*. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 1, No.3, 1963, pp.331-347.
27. M. Gluckman, *'Rituals of Rebellion in South-east Africa'*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1954.
28. P. Duncan, *op.cit.* p.346.
29. *ibid.* p.346
30. *ibid.* p.346

31. L.A. Coser, '*The Functions of Social Conflict*'.
Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1965.
32. *ibid.* p.81
33. S. Mennell, '*Sociological Theory: Uses and Unities*',
Nelson, London, 1974., pp.141-143.
34. *ibid.* pp.161-165. One would not expect a structural-
functionalist perspective to place that emphasis on
such concepts as 'power' and 'powerlessness'. This
criticism is taken up later in this chapter.
35. J. Brecher provides an interesting discussion of
differentiated patterns of trade union activities
amongst manual workers in American industries,
J. Brecher, '*Strike!*', South End Press, Boston
Massachusetts, USA, 1972.
36. M.P. Jackson, '*Trade Unions*', Croom Helm, London 1981,
pp. 157-183.
37. J. Rex argues that this kind of failure of analysis
is attributable to a rigid focus on a particular social
element, process or phenomenon, with little regard
to an overall structural examination.

"What we lack most of all in sociology
.....is an overall structural view, and
this is especially in the case of our own
world, because we take it too much for
granted, or study its bits and pieces in
such a specialist way that we never see
the wood for the trees."

J. Rex, *op.cit.* p.119.
38. Some of the more relevant works from the highly
diversified social scientific literature on fishermen
and fishing are quoted in the bibliography.
39. R. Andersen and C. Wadel, *op.cit.* p.8.
40. J. Tunstall, '*The Fishermen*', MacGibbon and Kee,
London, 1962.
41. R. Andersen and C. Wadel, *op.cit.* pp.175-182.

42. G. Salaman makes the assertion that
 "This 'extreme' occupation has been the subject
 of a good deal of sociological investigation."
 G. Salaman, *op.cit.*, p.51.
 This does not accord with the documentary evidence
 of the literature survey.

43. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* pp.12 and 13.

44. See J. Rule, *op.cit.* p.60 and R. Andersen in R. Andersen
 and C. Wadel, *op.cit.* pp.143-152.

45. Godfrey and Godman, *op.cit.* pp.188-193.

46. This casual system of employment of fish-market porters,
 known in Aberdeen and Grimsby as 'lumpers' and in Hull
 as 'bobbbers' was abolished when the fish markets in
 these ports came under the authority of the National
 Dock Labour Board. See Chapter 7.

47. The relationship between labour, capital and the state
 and its effects upon the structure, functioning and
 the industrial relations of the industry is discussed
 later in this chapter and later chapters.

48. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* pp.174-175.

49. The chapter from which the above quotation is extracted
 is entitled '*Fisherman's World Picture*', *ibid.* pp.166-175.

50. See, for example, V. Aubert, '*A total institution, the ship*'
 in '*The Hidden Society*', (ed. by same author), Bedminster
 Press, Totown, New Jersey, USA, 1965, and V. Aubert and
 O. Arner, '*On the social structure of the ship*' in the same
 publication.

51. C. Wright Mills has argued that the problem with most
 empirical research in sociology is that both in the
 definition of research problems and explanations little
 use is made of the basic concept of historical social
 structures. C. Wright Mills, '*The Sociological
 Imagination*', Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1959,
 p.68.

52. "Meanwhile the fortunes of the deep-sea fleet have continued to decline, with more old trawlers and relatively modern freezers tied up in dock."
White Fish Authority Annual Reports and Accounts 1978-9, W.F.A., Edinburgh, 1979, p.3.
53. C. Wright Mills, *op.cit.* pp.65/66
54. 'The UK Fishing Industry Today', *Midland Bank Review*, Winter 1980, London, 1980, pp.12-16.
55. N.A. Godman, *op.cit.* pp.7-9
56. G. Winder, 'International Territorial Limits in Relation to Fishing' in 'Atlantic Ocean Fisheries', edited by G. Borgstrom and A.J. Heighway, Fishing News (Books) Ltd., London, 1961, pp.49-54.
57. Tunstall, *op.cit.* Chapter 1, 'The History of Trawler Fishing in Hull' It is the author's view that this historical approach helps strengthen the analysis. Also, as K. Marx observed:

".....men make their own history, they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past."

quoted in D. McClellan, 'Marx' Fontana, London, 1975, p.43.
58. See, for example, I. Carter's essay 'The Changing Image of the Scottish Peasantry' in 'People's History and Socialist Theory', edited by R. Samuel, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1981, pp.9-14.
59. C. Wright Mills, *op.cit.* p.149
60. *ibid.* p.154.
61. This is Carter's approach to the sociological analysis of Scottish farmworkers, since he stresses the importance of history in his work whilst being explicitly theoretical and empirical. I. Carter, *op.cit.*

62. See T.B. Bottomore, *op.cit.* p.27.
63. *ibid.* p.28.
64. J. Rex, *op.cit.* pp.7-9.
65. There are, for example, major historical and other differences between the catching sector of the industry in the Shetland Islands or Cornwall, and the fishing ports of Grimsby and Hull. There are even bigger differences between all of these and those observed in Malaya as reported by the social anthropologist, R. Firth, (*Malay Fishermen : Their Peasant Economy*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Second Edition, London, 1966).
66. The British fishing industry is itself highly variegated in the component parts of its structure, and one author has written a book, as previously mentioned, entitled '*The Fishing Industries of Scotland*', M. Gray, *op.cit.*
67. One is particularly mindful of the impact of technological innovations in the detection and harvesting of fish stocks. An example of this is the Norwegian purse-seiner-fishing vessel and its pronounced effects on fish stocks. (This will be more fully discussed in later chapters.) However, technology is not an imperative here: that is to say the impact of technological innovation and technological change are mediated through social, economic and political forces.
68. See, for example, '*Report of the Working Group on Discipline in the Fishing Industry*', Department of Trade, HMSO, 1975, Chapter 4.
69. See Table 29, p.452, for statistical evidence on the accident rates on fishing vessels in recent years.
70. Tunstall, whilst he discusses the hardships and dangers faced by the trawler-crews and the relationship between their working conditions and the position of their skippers and vis-a-vis the demands made by the employers, fails to examine this important theoretical matter.
71. '*Trawler Safety*', *Interim Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety*, HMSO, London, September, 1968, Cmnd.3773, p.3.

72. A Department of Trade Inquiry sitting at Aberdeen on 28th December, 1981, heard that:

"A massive 'lump of water' swept three fishermen to their deaths in spite of a split-second warning from their skipper. The crew of the Aberdeen trawler *Clarkwood* were hauling the net aboard because of gale force winds when the wave struck..... The skipper shouted to the crew as soon as he saw the wave coming. "It lifted up the gear. I knew at once some of the crew were over the side". Skipper Thomson spotted three men in the water and tried to manoeuvre the ship round to pick them up in 50 m.p.h. winds off Fair Isle on November 23rd this year." *"Aberdeen Evening Express, 29th December, 1981.*

The question this inquiry failed to answer was why was this vessel fishing in such difficult weather conditions.

73. "About three-quarters of the Hull skippers and nearly half of the mates belong to the Hull Trawler Officers' Guild. It is not a trade union, is not affiliated to the T.U.C., and charges an annual subscription of £10 (sic). The organisation was founded in 1934 and since the war has played an important part in the affairs of the industry." Tunstall, *op.cit.* p.217. (This organisation, principally because of a severe decrease in membership, was wound up in 1980: Skipper T. Neilson in personal communication to the author, June 1980.)
74. *'Trawler Safety', op.cit.* p.5.
75. *ibid.* p.6.
76. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* p.183.
77. *ibid.* p.189.
78. Tunstall's book was first published in 1962. Today there are no British trawlers fishing off the coasts of Greenland and Iceland, even although some few in number still fish off the Norwegian coast.
79. Trainee-deckhands.

80. *ibid.* p.12.
81. A. Villiers, *op.cit.* pp.66-76.
82. *Sunday Times*, 8th January, 1967.
83. Extract from a letter, written by a Scottish fishing-vessel owner-skipper, *Fishing News*, April 17th, 1981.
84. This in no way minimises the effects that the material environment may well have on activities performed by men who, as a species, are physiologically and biologically alien to it.
85. One can see similar developments obtaining from texts in industrial sociology, e.g. H. Beynon, '*Working for Ford*', E.P. Publishing Ltd., Wakefield, England, 1975; and T. Nicholls and P. Armstrong '*Workers Divided*', Fontana, London, 1976.
86. S. Lukes, '*Power: A Radical View*', Macmillan, London, 1974.
87. *ibid.* p.10.
88. *ibid.* pp.23-25.
89. *ibid.* p.9 (*Italics added: Author*).
90. P.A. Samuelson makes an interesting point concerning the role of theory in the examination of social phenomena: "Every theory, whether in the physical, or biological or social sciences, distorts reality in that it oversimplifies. But if it is good theory, what is omitted is outweighed by the beam of illumination and understanding thrown over the diverse empirical data." P.A. Samuelson, *Economics*, McGraw-Hill Kogakusha Ltd., London, 1976, p.9.
91. T.B. Bottomore, *op.cit.* p.15.
92. Whilst this is a qualification to Lukes' theory of power it does not weaken his perspective.

93. R. Hyman and I. Brough adopt a perspective of power in industrial relations that is quite close to the one formulated by Lukes. See R. Hyman and I. Brough *'Social Values and Industrial Relations'*, Basil Blackwood, Oxford, 1975.
94. *ibid.* p.152. The dictionary to which Hyman and Brough refer is *'The Dictionary of Sociology'*, edited by G.C. Mitchell, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1968.
95. T. Parsons, *'Structure and Process in Modern Societies'*, Free Press, New York, 1960, p.18
96. See, for example, C. Wright-Mills, 1959; J. Rex, 1961; A. Giddens, 1968; S. Mennell, 1974 R. Hyman and I Brough, 1975.
97. Hyman and Brough hold that the same criticism can be made of the structuralist-functionalist theory of economic and social inequality, *op.cit.* p.154.
98. *ibid.* p.155.
99. *ibid.* p.155. There is in this concept of power a clear, unmistakable similarity with Marx, viz. "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e. the class, which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force." K. Marx and F. Engels, *'The German Ideology'*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1970, p.39. Originally written in 1846, first published 1932 and first English edition 1938.
100. Lukes, *op.cit.* pp.28-29.
101. See R.A. Dahl, *'The Concept of Power'* in *'Political Power: A Reader in Theory and Research'*, edited by R. Bell, D.M. Edwards and R. Harrison Wagner, Free Press, New York, U.S.A., 1969, and N.W. Polsby, *'Community Power and Political Theory'*, Yale University Press, New Haven, U.S.A., 1963.
102. Dahl, *op.cit.* p.80.
103. Polsby, *op.cit.* p.55
104. T. Clarke and L. Clements, *'Trade Unions under Capitalism'*, Fontana, London, 1977, pp.131-132.

105. Lukes, *op.cit.* pp.14-15.
106. J. Gaventa, *'Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley'*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1980, p.7. The author came across this book by Gaventa after his field work had been completed. He then discovered that he and Gaventa were working in parallel on the testing of the 'empirical applicability' of Lukes' radical theory of power.
107. An important research paper - later to be criticised by its author who came to change his perspective of industrial conflict, in this respect - was A. Fox, *'Industrial Sociology and Industrial Relations'*, Research Paper No.3, Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers Associations, London, HMSO, 1966. T. Clarke and L. Clements discuss pluralism in the following terms:
- 'The primary orientation of the 'pluralist' approach is towards the normative and institutional regulation of the collective bargaining relationship between employers and unions within capitalism, ignoring the element of conflict and opposition inherent in unionism to the very existence of capitalism. As Goldthorpe infers, beneath the veneer of neutrality, "the liberal-pluralist approach to industrial relations is managerial in its priorities and conservative in its implications." Nevertheless, the work at this school has not only achieved predominance in the academic world; but has also been adopted by the state and - even more significantly ; by large sections of the labour movement, as the most adequate analysis of contemporary industrial relations.'
- T. Clarke and L. Clements, *op.cit.* p.131.
108. J.H. Goldthorpe, *'Industrial Relations in Great Britain: A Critique of Reformism'*, *ibid.* p.214.
109. See H.A. Clegg, *'A New Approach to Industrial Democracy'*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1960; H.A. Clegg, *'The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain'*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1970; A. Flanders, *'Collective Bargaining: Prescription for change'* Faber and Faber, London, 1967; W.E.J. McCarthy, *'The Closed Shop in Britain'*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1964, and W.E.J. McCarthy and N.D. Ellis, *'Management by Agreement: an alternative to the Industrial Relations Act'*, Hutchinson, London, 1973.
110. P. Bachrach and M.S. Baratz, *'Power and Poverty: Theory and Practice'*, Oxford University Press, New York, U.S.A., 1970, p.7.

111. Bachrach and Baratz cite Schattschneider's oft-quoted comment: 'All forms of political organisation have a bias in favour of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others, because organisation is the mobilisation of bias. Some issues are organised into politics while others are organised out.' E.E. Schattschneider, *'The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America'*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1960. This 'mobilisation of bias' is a significant idea in the discussion of the distribution of power within political parties; see L. Minkin, *'The Labour Party Conference'*, Allen Lane, London, 1978.
112. Bachrach and Baratz, pp.49-50.
113. There is also revealed a clear conceptual link between the two views of power in that both emphasise the essential nature of observable conflict to power relations, see Lukes, *op. cit.* p.19.
114. *ibid.* p.23.
115. *ibid.* p.23.
116. *ibid.* p.24.
117. *ibid.* p.34.
118. *ibid.* p.38.
119. *ibid.* p.35.
120. *ibid.* p.41.
121. J. Gaventa, *op.cit.* p.13.
122. See, for example, K. Sissons *'Industrial Relations in Fleet Street'*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1975, and W.E.J. McCarthy, *'The Role of Shop Stewards in British Industry'*, HMSO, London, 1966.
123. J.H. Goldthorpe stresses this methodological frailty in much of the literature on industrial relations, *op.cit.* pp.209-217.
124. J. Westergaard and H. Resler, *'Class in a Capitalist Society'* Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1976, p.143.

125. B. Barber, *'Social Stratification'*, Harcourt, Bruce and World Inc., New York, 1957, p.7.
126. See T.B. Bottomore, *'Political Sociology'*, Hutchinson, London, 1979, pp.23-40.
127. J. Gaventa, *op.cit.* p.17.
128. *ibid.* p.18.
129. John Rex, *op.cit.* pp.117-125.
130. P. Freire, *Cultural Action for Freedom*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1972, especially p.52. This failure in the development of a 'critical consciousness' (to which Freire alludes) is a continuing source of disappointment to political radicals. See Bottomore, *'Political Sociology'*, pp.33-35.
131. J. Gaventa, *op.cit.* p.19.
132. There are other approaches, one could adopt, in the analysis of power relationships; there is in Western Europe a long, honourable tradition of Marxist study, see, for example, R. Hyman, *'Marxism and the Sociology of Trade Unionism'*, Pluto Press, London, 1971.
133. In this context, it should be noted that valuable work has already been carried out by J.H. Goldthorpe (*op.cit.*), and R. Hyman and I Brough (*op.cit.*)
134. There is wide-ranging discussion in C. Bell and H. Newby, *op.cit.* on the genesis and development of research ideas.
135. Tunstall attempts to give his account of social relationships within the fishing industry some historical depth; he also seeks an understanding of the fishermen's consciousness, albeit in an untheoretical way, *op.cit.* pp.156-165.
136. Numerous research studies, because principally of their methodological structure, fail to isolate the distinction between the appearance and reality of the uneven distribution of power in employer-employee relations, see K. Sissons, *op.cit.*

137. J. Gaventa, *op.cit.*
138. *ibid.* pp.205-251.
139. There is an interesting discussion of this relationship between the state, capital and labour in C. Crouch, 'The Politics of Industrial Relations', Fontana, London, 1977.
140. This definition is adapted from the one proposed by Hyman and Brough, *op.cit.* p.155.
141. See, for example, Duncan, *op.cit.*, and Tunstall, *op.cit.*
142. For the importance of the EEC and the scheme of things see Chapter 8 and Godfrey and Godman, *op.cit.*
143. The importance of this relationship to the structure of industrial relations has attracted increasing attention in recent years although it has always been of central concern for Marxist economists and sociologists, see J. Westergaard and H. Resler, *op.cit.* pp.2-3.
144. R.K. Middlemas, 'The Politics of an Industrial Society', Andre Deutsch, London, 1979.
145. It is because of this view of developments that Middlemas has been labelled a corporatist, i.e. that he sees advanced capitalists societies in the late twentieth century bearing the hallmarks of the corporatist state. In fact, Middlemas does not go beyond an emphasis on 'corporate bias' in economic and political developments in these nations. C. Crouch, *op.cit.* argues a similar pluralist case to that of Middlemas.
146. It could be argued that this triangular relationship is a little less unequal in the Scandinavian nations than it is in other capitalist nations in Europe. Some sociologists and political scientists have argued that this is the case where Sweden is concerned and that this has been brought about by, *inter alia*, some forty years of almost unbroken Social Democratic government, extending from the nineteen-thirties to the nineteen-seventies. See F.G. Castles, 'The Social Democratic Image of Society', Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1978.

147. When this research study took place, the Transport and General Workers' Union had a membership of close to two millions making it easily the largest union in the UK. In 1977, for example, the membership of the union was approximately 1,950,000 (Minutes and Records of the Proceedings of the Twenty-seventh Biennial Delegates Conference, T & GWU, 1977, Transport House London, 1977, p.42.
148. The significance of maritime labour law in shaping the employment relationship between fishermen and their employers in recent times is discussed in Chapter 8.
149. In a more general sense, Westergaard and Resler contend: "The growth of state activity has made for modifications of (some) institutions and premises in their earlier forms. But these are modifications only: not radical changes, important though they have been. Public ownership of some productive assets has reduced the size of the field from which private profit is raised directly. But on the whole - despite a mixture of originating motives and despite inefficiencies of implementation - public ownership in practice is directed to securing private profit elsewhere. It certainly has little effect on ownership of wealth. Public provision of services has vastly increased in some fields to remove consumption wholly or partly from the direct blast of market forces. But tight limits are still set to the ways in which tax revenue is raised and benefits are distributed, through the simple fact of the continuing predominance of private enterprise and private capital in the economy." J. Westergaard and H. Resler, *op.cit.* p.249.
150. See Chapter 6.
151. This kind of neutrality can be seen in many fields; see J. Rex and R. Moore, 'Race, Community and Conflict', Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1967.
152. See R. Hyman and I. Brough, *op.cit.*, 69-73.
153. R.K. Middlemas, *op.cit.*, pp.415-425.
154. A.V. Cicourel's, 'Method and Measurement in Sociology', The Free Press, New York, 1964, was a useful guide to the author.
155. *ibid.* pp.1-24.

156. There are some features that are distinctive to this industry; perhaps one of the most important of these is the nature of the resource that is utilised. Potentially, at the very least, fish is a replenishable natural resource, quite unlike that in another traditional, regionally based industry, coal and utterly unlike the recently established industry, North Sea Oil.
157. This is a common failing shared by both social scientific and non-social scientific observers; see J. Tunstall, *op.cit.*
158. This is a double-edged criticism. D. Phillips argued: "I believe we must be extremely critical of sociological methods and theories. A critique of sociological methods is indispensable, both for the strengthening of the sociologist's self-awareness and for the reconstruction of sociology itself." D.L. Phillips, *'Abandoning Method: Sociological Studies in Methodology'*, Jossey-Bass Inc., San Francisco, 1973, p.xii.
159. As elaborated, for example, in P. Mann, *'Methods of Sociological Enquiry'*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1968.
160. The researcher's father was a fisherman, employed for many years by a Hull trawler company and his mother, the daughter of a Scottish fishergirl (known in the Hull fishing industry as a 'fishhouse lass'), worked in Hull fish processing plants for upwards of twenty-five years. The researcher has made several voyages to both the Arctic fishing grounds and the near-water grounds.
161. A.W. Gouldner, *'The Politics of the Mind'*, Social Policy, 1972, No.2, p.19.
162. A short, somewhat exiguous questionnaire was used in the study, but only to obtain statistical and structural information from a group of European trade union officials, whom the author interviewed in Brussels. They represented fishermen in Norway, Faroe Islands, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Spain and Italy. See Appendix 15, Questionnaire used in the Study.
163. G. Bamber provides an interesting example of an uncritical and enthusiastic use of questionnaires in his study of managerial trade unionism, see G. Bamber, *Managerial Trade Unionism*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Faculty of Economic and Social Studies, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, 1979.

164. See A.N. Openheim, 'Questionnaire Design and Attitude Measurement', Heinemann, 1966, and G. Moser and G. Kalton, 'Survey Methods of Sociological Investigation', Heinemann Educational, London, 1958.
165. D.L. Phillips, *op.cit.* p.38.
166. *ibid.* p.56.
167. *ibid.* p.57.
168. C. Bell and H. Newby, *op.cit.* p.22.
169. The point is, however, that for numerous reasons the administration of questionnaires and the interviews with respondents become the major tool for winking out information that the social investigators deem essential to the requirements of the investigation; see G. Bamber, *op.cit.* pp.486-487.
170. H. Newby, *op.cit.* pp.113-114. Interestingly enough, Newby sought his sample by way of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, which refused to co-operate. He then sought to contact the farm-workers by way of an intitial approach to their employers, the farmers: "This was not only an administrative convenience, but probably also an administrative necessity." *ibid.* p.115.
171. There are examples of Carter's work in R. Samuel, *op.cit.*

With Carter's work one is reminded of the historian, E.H. Carr's comment:

".....the more sociological history becomes, and the more historical sociology becomes, the better for both. Let the frontier between them be kept wide open for two-way traffic."

E.H. Carr, 'What is History?' Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1961, p.66.
172. C. Wright-Mills, *op.cit.* p.70.
173. S. Webb and B. Webb, 'Industrial Democracy', published by the authors, London, 1913.

174. Some interviews are crucial to the whole research study; for instance, in a study such as this one the question of access to organisations, documents and so on is of the utmost importance and the granting of access or not is often determined by an interview or series of interviews between the research worker and the all-important gatekeeper. In this instance, of course, the former is, more often than not, the interviewee and the latter, hence the label, the interviewer. It is the researcher's opinion that the question of access to data is not given the consideration it merits in the literature on sociological research methods.
175. There will follow a more detailed discussion of the records used in this study but first some general and critical observations are made anent documents and records.
176. G. Kitson Clark, *'The Critical Historian'*, Heinemann, London, 1967, p.76.
177. E.H. Carr, *op.cit.* p.16.
178. A.V. Cicourel, *op.cit.* p.143.
179. Many critics of the conventional social survey technique tend to overlook this curious analogy, see C. Wright Mills, *op.cit.*, pp.144-146.
180. S. Raffel, *'Matters of Fact'*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1979, p.9.
181. *ibid.* pp.48-49.
182. See P.A. Samuelson, *op.cit.* Chapter One.
183. Quoted in I. Berlin, *'Meetings with Russian Writers in 1945 and 1956'* in his *'Personal Impressions'*, Hogarth Press, London, 1980, p.156.
184. See C. Bell and H. Newby, *op.cit.* pp.16-29.
185. B. Hindess, *'The Use of Official Statistics in Sociology'*, Macmillan, London, 1973, p.12. J.Irvine, I.Miles and J.Evans advise caution in the interpretation of official statistics in their text: *op.cit.*

186. See S. Raffel, *op.cit.* Chapter 4.
187. See H. Newby, *op.cit.* p.113½
188. M. Dalton, 'Preconceptions and Methods in Men who Manage' in 'Sociologists at Work', edited by P. Hammond, Basic Books, New York, 1964, p.74.
189. See W.H. Sprott, *Human Groups*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1964, Ch.3.
190. P. Worsley, *Introducing Sociology*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1975, p.98.
191. J. Friedrichs and H. Lüdtke, 'Participant Observation: Theory and Practice', Saxon House, Farnborough, 1975, p.22.
192. *ibid.* pp.20-22.
193. W.F. Whyte: 'Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum', University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1943.
194. *ibid.* p.24.
195. J. Friedrichs and H. Lüdtke, *op.cit.* pp.161-162.
196. P. Worsley, *op.cit.* p.100.
197. J. Friedrichs and H. Lüdtke, *op.cit.* pp.83-89.
198. J. Madge, 'The Tools of Social Science', Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1953, p.117.
199. S. Webb and B. Webb, *op.cit.* p.xi.
200. D.L. Phillips, *op.cit.* p.177.
201. 'History does not consist entirely of re-assembled old news, although most, if significantly not all, modern historians make increasing use of newspapers', Lord Asa Briggs, 'Old News', Guardian, 28th May 1981.

202. See L. Minkin, *op.cit.* p.xvii.
203. The various aspects of the study's methodology are discussed in the text where and when appropriate.
204. See R. Hyman and I. Brough, *op.cit.* pp.ix, 1-6; J. Rex, *op.cit.* p.124.
205. G. Bamber, *op.cit.* p.480.
206. This manager was, in all his meetings with the researcher unfailingly courteous even although he warned the skipper of the vessel that the researcher was 'a trade union man and had to be watched'.
207. Primary-source information concerning the employers' attitudes to and relationships with their employees was available from other sources; see Chapters 4, 5 and 6.
208. See Map of the T&GWU's regional Areas, Appendix 13, p.663. A decision had been taken by the General Executive Council of the T&GWU in 1973 to give the role of National Fishing Officer to the Regional Secretary of Number 10 Region whose office is situated in Hull but whose sphere of responsibility covers both Hull and Grimsby.
209. The Scottish Regional of the T&GWU is No.7, see Appendix 13, p.663.
210. It was not possible to attend union meetings in Fleetwood, Lowestoft and North Shields. These ports along with those visited are the ones where the bulk of the trades union membership amongst fishermen is to be found. See *Fifth Report from the House of Commons Expenditure Committee's Sub-Committee on Trade and Industry on the Fishing Industry*, HMSO, London, 1978, p.38.
211. Chapters 6 and 7 contain a detailed discussion of the structure and functions of the trade union.
212. Fully 53 of these were trawler engineers or retired trawler engineers.

213. Some of these skippers and mates have subsequently joined the T&GWU. Personal communication from J.M.Keenan, District Officer, T&GWU, Transport House, 44 King Street, Aberdeen.
214. Interestingly enough, on an Aberdeen stern-trawler on which he sailed as a member of the crew, the author was accused, by a deckhand, of being a 'spy for the managers' on the grounds that he was 'from a university.' Fortunately, the accuser was persuaded by an engineer who had met the researcher at union branch meetings that this was not the case.
215. The language and terminology of the fishermen and their fishing/work activities will be discussed in later chapters. See, however, J. Tunstall (*op.cit.*) for some vivid examples - and translations-of the argot of the fishermen.
216. See P. Duncan, *op.cit.*
217. Quoted in J. Friedrichs and H. Lüdtke, *op.cit.* p.199.
218. *ibid.* p.199.
219. Where these conversations and notes are concerned, the author readily acknowledges Akhmatova's elegant strictures anent the fallibility of both the memory, and written recollections, of past conversations or events. I. Berlin, *op.cit.* p.156.
220. Despite having made several voyages to the North Atlantic fishing grounds long before this study was conceived, it would have been difficult for the author to persuade the fishermen that he was, for example, a deckhand with considerable experience. S. Raffel provides a noteworthy discussion of the problems surrounding sociological observation, see S. Raffel, *op.cit.* pp.29-47

221. The Sea Fisheries Training Council (SFTC) was established, and funded, by the Manpower Services Commission in 1978, to conduct the co-ordination of training of personnel in this sector of the industry in an analogous way to that of the industrial training boards. There is one important distinction between the SFTC, however, and the training boards, namely the SFTC does not impose a financial levy on employers in the industry. The fact that the SFTC has never at any time imposed a levy on employers suggests a power structure weighted in favour of the owners. See N.A. Godman, *The Sea Fisheries Training Council: A Fishing Quango*, Marine Policy, Vol.3, No.2, 1980, pp.145-148. See also *Sea Fisheries Training Council Annual Report 1978/79*, SFTC, York, 1979.
222. See *The Report of the Working Party on the Safety of Fishermen*, HMSO, London, 1978: *Recommended Code of Safety for Fishermen*, HMSO, London, 1978, and *Fishermen and Safety*, HMSO, 1978.
223. This Committee is comprised of fishing industry employers' and employees' representatives plus their advisers and officials of the EEC. Its primary concerns are the conditions of work and the training of fishermen throughout the whole of the EEC. The objective is to provide guide lines on the best practices to be found in the EEC in order to create reasonable and uniform, or common, conditions of service and work amongst the EEC's fishing industries.
224. See Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of the thesis. See also R. Hyman, *'The Workers' Union'*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971.
225. However, such opportunities to observe at close quarters the interactions of state officials, employers and trade union representatives at both domestic and international levels are rare.
226. G. Bamber, *op.cit.* p.486.
227. It makes sense to talk in terms of involvement rather than objectivity.
228. The author was refused permission, by management representatives, to attend joint management-union meetings in one of the major ports.

229. It is the case, of course, that in some of these countries, e.g. Norway, Denmark, Spain and Italy, fishing is an important, regionally based, industry. See J. Coull, *'The Fisheries of Europe'*, G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London, 1972. For the Faroes, it is their major industry, without which there would be virtually no domestic economy to sustain the population of some 44,000, *Guardian*, August 8th, 1981.
230. The questionnaire is reproduced at Appendix 18 , p.672.
231. J. Friedrichs and H. Lüdtke, *op.cit.* pp.85-87.
232. *ibid.* p.85.
233. See the discussion in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine.
234. See Phillips, *op.cit.* p.43.
235. A. Keenan, *'Selection interview outcomes in relation to interviewer training and experience'*, *Journal of Social Psychology*, 1978, 106, pp.249-260.
236. *op.cit.* S. Webb and B. Webb, *op.cit.*
237. These minutes were unfortunately somewhat fragmentary in terms of chronological ordering but were a useful primary source for the period of the nineteen sixties and seventies.
238. This small, port-based trade union amalgamated with the T. & GWU in 1976, at which time the former comprised 210 members whilst the latter had a membership of 1,904,884.
239. See Appendixes 3 and 4, pp.581-586, for examples of some of these documents.
240. See Appendixes 6 and 7, pp.590-591.
241. See Appendix 10, p.631.
242. See Appendixes 8 and 9, pp.604-605.

- 243. G. Bamber, *op.cit.* p.483.
- 244. The library contains in its archives the minutes books of the Aberdeen Trades Council dating from the late nineteenth century.
- 245. Documents of the Scottish fishermen's trade unions have been deposited in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, Scottish Record Office and the National Library of Scotland.
- 246. Webb Collection, Section C, Vol.LXXXVIII, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London School of Economics, London.
- 247. I. MacDougall, *Labour Records in Scotland*, Scottish Labour History Society, 1978, Edinburgh,
- 248. These documents did show, however, that most fishermen appeared to be casually employed, i.e. from voyage to voyage.
- 249. The structures and activities of these two organisations will be explained in Chapter Six.
- 250. Lord Asa Briggs, *op.cit.*
- 251. See Bibliography: Employers' Associations and Company Documents, and Publications.
- 252. S. Raffel, *op.cit.* pp.51-54.
- 253. A.F. Blum, '*Theorizing*' in *Understanding Everyday Life*, edited by J.D. Douglas, Aldine, Chicago, 1970.

CHAPTER 3

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE IN THE BRITISH FISHING INDUSTRY

C H A P T E R 3

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE IN THE
BRITISH FISHING INDUSTRY¹

Technological innovation and change, it would appear, came rather slowly and haltingly to the British fishing industry in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Historians have commented upon the apparent failure of fishing-vessel owners and others to grasp the significant implications of changing technology, principally in the form of steam as a motive power for the industry. Aberdeen which was to become, in a few years, a major British, if not European, fishing port with a large fleet of steam trawlers, at the beginning of the eighteen-eighties had but a small number of sailing fishing vessels.² An economic historian has described the port in 1880 thus:

"In 1880 the main fishing activity at Aberdeen was its part in a summer fishing in which the port occupied an important but by no means dominant position. Few of the boats which worked out of Aberdeen for this seasonal fishing belonged either to it or to the nearby fishing communities, for the resident fishing fleet consisted of only a handful of sailing boats owned by the men of the tiny settlements of Torry and Footdee."³

The fishing industry was, and has so remained, both economically and culturally important for numerous communities on the mainland and in the islands of Scotland.⁴ There were in 1881 over fourteen thousand sailing fishing-vessels which ranged in length (of keel) from under eighteen feet to upwards of sixty feet,⁵ almost all of which engaged in line fishing for demersal fish and drift-net fishing for

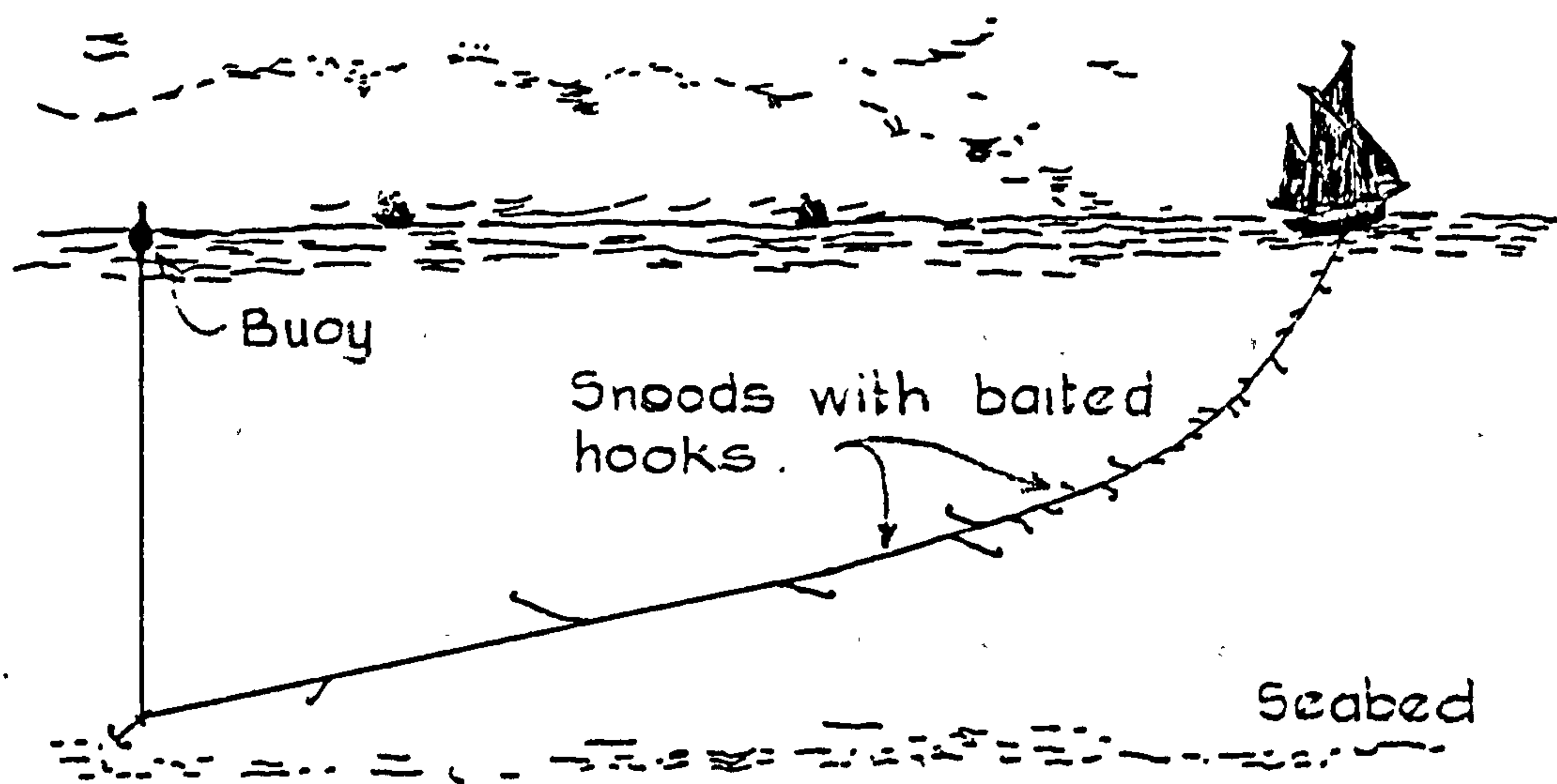
herring (see Figure 2, p. 124). Fishing had, of course, played a significant part in the lives of many Scots for centuries and this had been acknowledged and formally recognised in legislation and in the protection of the fisheries.⁶ In the late nineteenth century it provided employment on a comprehensive scale, as the first report of the new fishery board pointed out:

Another aspect of the growing importance of the industry may be seen in the increasing value of the boats employed. This value in 1862 was estimated at £272,960; in 1872 it increased to £381,338 and in 1882 to £646,883. Further the estimated value of the nets used in 1862 was £407,237; in 1872 it rose to £521,332 and in 1882 to £711,039. To this may be added that the total number of persons employed in connection with the Fisheries in Scotland last year (1882) was estimated at 99,396, so that including the families, there may be altogether somewhere about half a million of people more or less dependent upon these fisheries.⁷

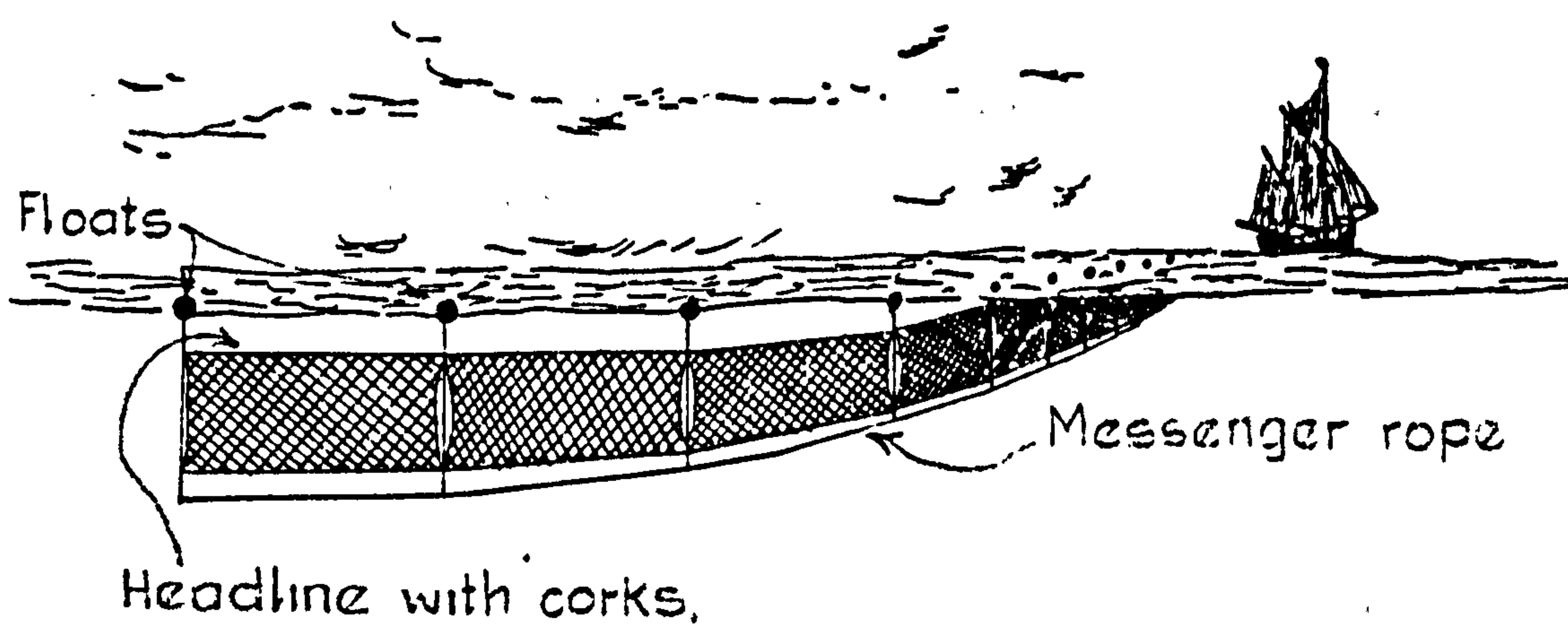
The true import of these increases in the value of vessels and gear can be seen when it is remembered that the period under review, 1862 to 1882, incorporates part of the so-called 'Great Depression' in Great Britain of 1873-96 during which the general price level fell by about 32 per cent; more specifically, the decline in prices in the period 1862-1882 was approximately 15 per cent.⁸ Similarly, the importance of the fisheries to Scotland at this time, with over 99,000 finding employment therein, is readily seen when one remembers that the total population of the nation was well below four million (approximately 3,753,600 at the 1881 Census).⁹

FIGURE 2

The Two Predominant Forms of Fishing Gear Technology in
Scotland in the late Nineteenth Century.



LONG LINING



FISHING WITH DRIFTNETS

If we examine the fishing industry in England and Wales at the same time, a similar picture emerges of thousands of sailing vessels, ranging in size from below twenty feet in length to large fishing smacks of seventy to eighty feet in length employed in coastal and North Sea fisheries (see Map 3, p. 129 for North Sea fishing grounds).¹⁰ The maritime historian, E. March, observed:

"In 1876 there were 3,142 first class fishing vessels of over 15 tons registered in England and Wales, the numbers at the principal trawling stations being:-
Hull 386, Grimsby 429, Scarborough 123, Yarmouth 552, Lowestoft 348, London 133, Ramsgate 157, Dover 20, Rye 33, Brixham 164, Plymouth 59, Liverpool 41 and Fleetwood 70. The figures for Yarmouth and Lowestoft include drifters as well as trawlers, but many of the herring boats (drifters) were 'converter' smacks."¹¹

As in Scotland, all of these vessels in England and Wales were sailing vessels.

The slowness in adaptation to steam, as a form of motive power for the mechanical propulsion of fishing vessels was not confined solely to the Scottish fishing fleets and fishing ports. English fishing interests, according to contemporary observers and historians, were seemingly equally lethargic in their cognisance of the possible adaptation to fishing activities of this technology that had, apart from its widespread application in land-based industries, by 1880 gained widespread recognition, support and investment in the British mercantile fleets. An English local historian has commented thus on technological change in the English fishing industry in the late nineteenth century:

"Within a very few years steam entirely replaced sail and the surprising fact is not that this happened, or that it occurred within a short space of time, but that the radical change seems to have caught the leaders of the fishing industry in Grimsby completely by surprise. It would seem that before 1880 very few of the owners or skippers had been able to appreciate the possibilities that changing technology could bring to the industry.¹²

Two observations will be made here, which will be taken up in more detail later in this chapter and the following one; first, by the late eighteen-seventies many fishing-vessel owners and skippers had utilised steam to drive capstans on their sailing smacks,¹³ in order to reduce the heavy manual labour involved, for example, in hauling in the trawl warp (see Fig.3, p. 132), running out the bowsprit, and hoisting the sails; secondly, some contemporary observers and historians have not paid sufficient attention to the frequently voiced hostility of some sailing fishing-vessel owners, skippers and fishermen to the advent of the steam trawler.¹⁴ The animosity shown to those who sought to introduce steam trawlers was generated, *inter alia*, by (a) a concern for the economic and financial implications of a radical transformation from sail to steam as a motive power, (b) the fear of disruption of both established social relationships (not that these were free of conflict)¹⁵ and modes of fishing activities, and (c) the belief, which was to grow in the next two or three decades, that steam trawling would be biologically harmful to the fish stocks in the North Sea and elsewhere.¹⁶ However, the main reason

for the animosity against the steam trawlers was that they threatened the livelihood of all those connected with sail.

Where the mercantile fleets were concerned, by 1880 the iron-built propeller-driven steamship was a commonplace sighting in the ports, harbours and rivers of Great Britain and other maritime nations.¹⁷ Some sixty years earlier in the century a steam-driven paddle ship had crossed from America to England, albeit under wind power for much longer periods than under steam, and in 1845 another ship crossed the Atlantic entirely with the use of steam and with no assistance at all from sails. One maritime historian stated that the decade of the 1840s was a quite remarkable period of experimentation and innovation in the development of the cargo-steamship:

London's prodigious demand for coal was the principal spur to the new developments, and the main source of supply, the North-East Coast of England, furnished many of the new designs. Once the screw propeller and the iron hull had conjoined to manifest their superiority over wooden hulls and paddles, a new impetus was generated by entrepreneurs, shipbuilders and marine engineers who vied with one another in devising novel and enterprising solutions to intractable problems posed by substituting steam for the large fleet of sailing colliers deployed on the Coast between the Tyne and the Thames.¹⁸

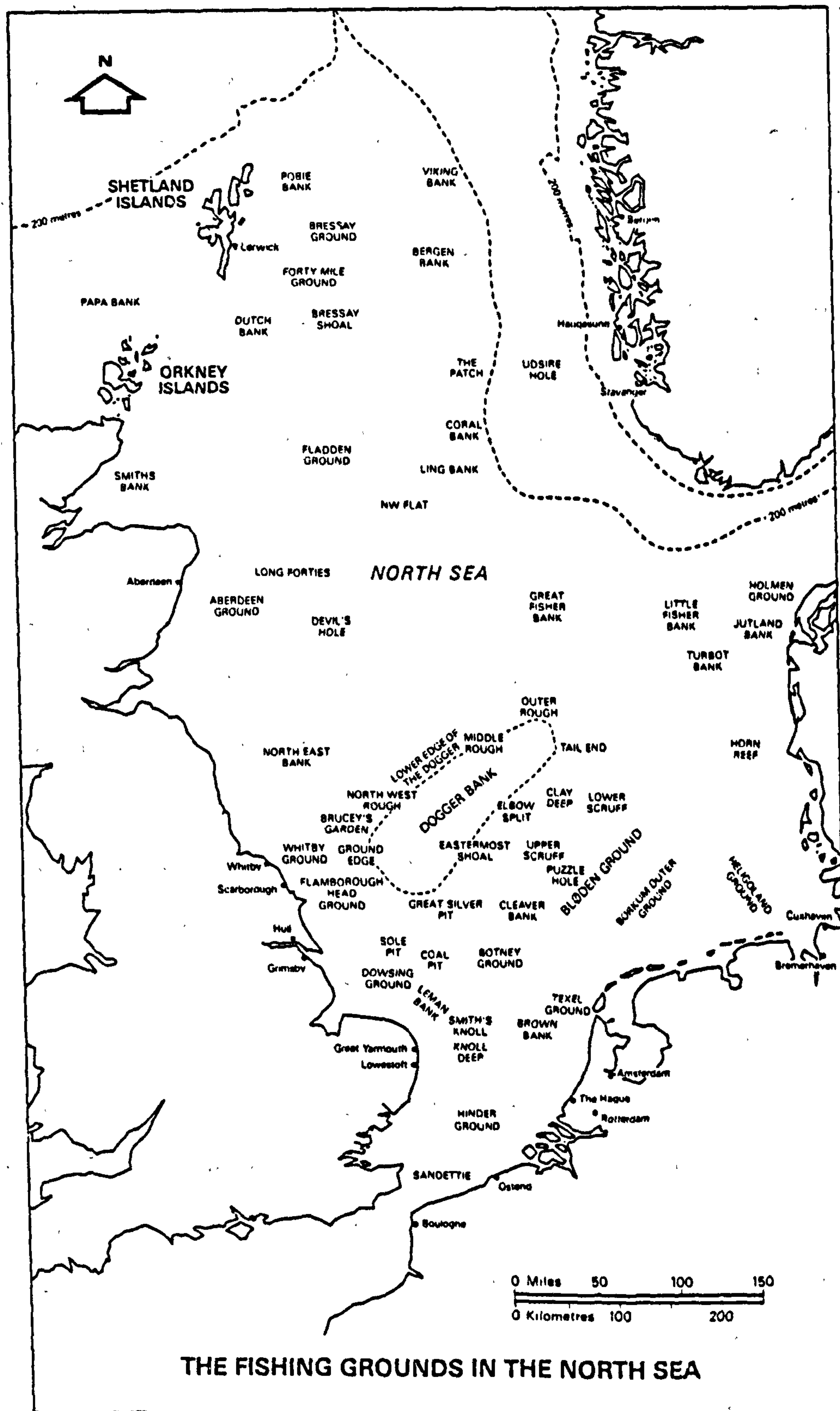
Shipbuilders on the River Clyde were also in the forefront in the design and development of steamships.¹⁹ One example of a Clyde-built steamship was the *Collier*, which was built in 1848 at Port Glasgow by John Reid and Company, the engine being constructed by Caird and Company

of Greenock. This vessel which completed a voyage to Australia in 1854, continued to operate commercially until 1914 and, in this longevity, was quite unlike some other vessels built about the same time which either suffered from serious faults in design or foundered in chance maritime disaster.²⁰

Another most successful steamship was the *John Bowes* built by Charles Mark Palmer in a shipyard at Jarrow on the River Tyne in 1852. Designed for the specific task of carrying coal from the Tyne to London, with engines constructed at Robert Stephenson's and with a cargo capacity of some six hundred tons, this vessel proved to be a profitable investment for the owners, being capable of performing the work of four similarly sized sailing vessels. Like the *Collier*, the *John Bowes* had a long active life and was, in fact, still operational when lost, through foundering, in 1933.²¹

The screw propeller, first employed in a ship constructed in 1838, proved on application to be so superior to the widely-used paddle-wheel, that Isambard Brunel, the British inventor and engineer, made it an integral element of his design for an iron ship of some 3,270 tons with large engines, that developed 1,500 horsepower, named the *Great Britain*. This was the first screw-propelled, iron-built ship to serve as a transatlantic liner. This vessel, launched at Bristol in 1843, carried both passengers and cargo and had a working life of some forty years.²³

MAP 3

The North Sea Fishing Grounds

Source: J. Nicolson, *Food from the Sea*, Cassell, London, 1979, p.71.

Early examples of British steamships have been given here to illustrate technological innovation and change in cargo and passenger ships in the nineteenth century. This technological change, particularly in bulk-carrying steamships, did not bring about a swift demise in the reliance upon the sailing ships for the transport of people and cargoes around Britain and between maritime nations.²⁴ In the eighteen sixties and eighteen seventies, an operating balance was achieved between steam and sail²⁵ but with the introduction of the triple expansion marine steam-engine in the late eighteen seventies and eighties, that balance and stability disappeared.²⁶ During the eighteen-eighties, the growing popularity of the steamship, based as it was on speed, economy and reliability hastened the irrevocable decline, reliance upon, and investment in, the sailing ship.²⁷

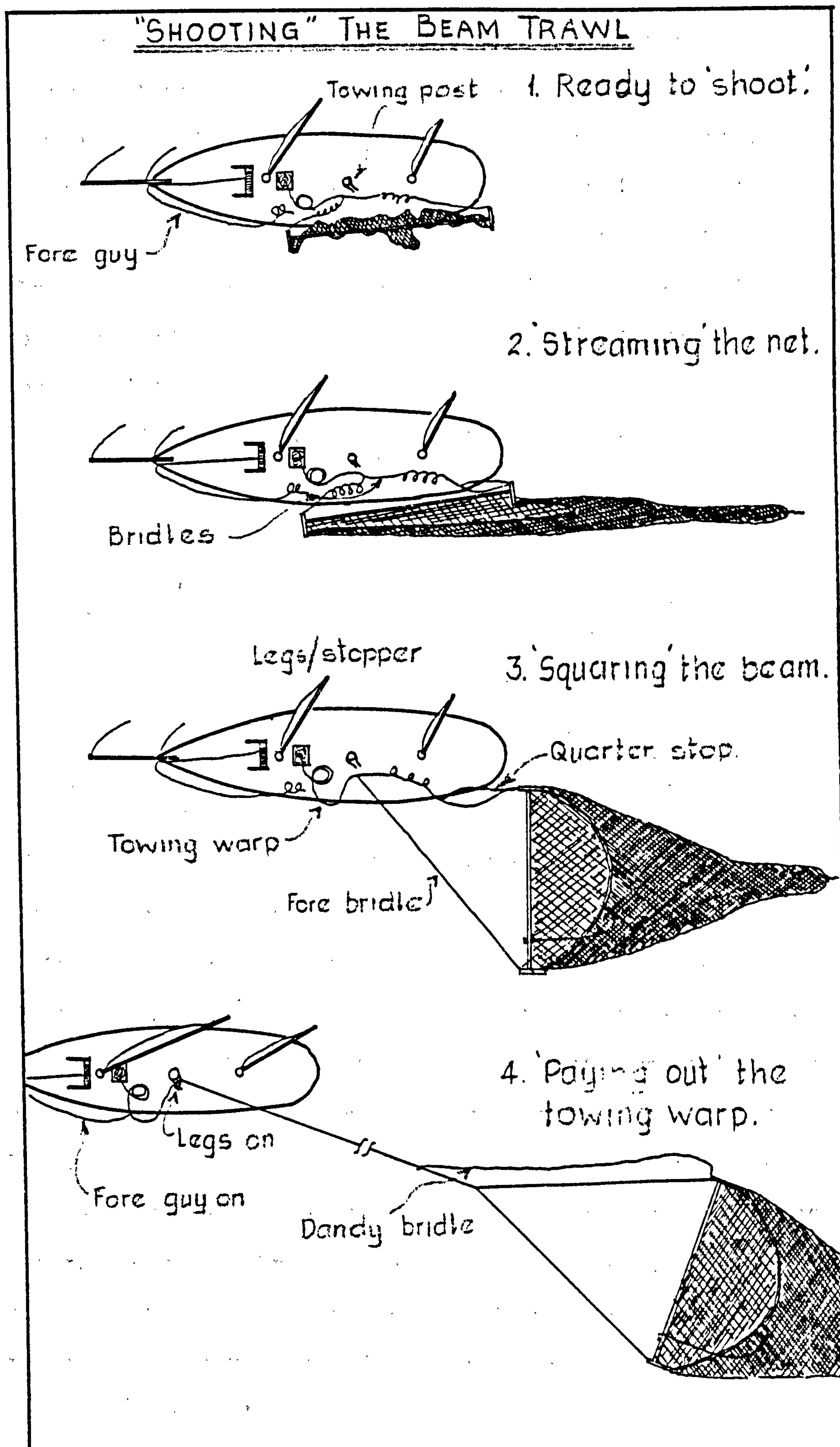
New engines designed by British engineers gave fresh impetus to this process of change. Compound engines which, by the eighteen-seventies, were widely incorporated in British steamships, made those steamships substantially superior to both sailing ships and the steamships of other nations.²⁸ Economies in fuel consumption were achieved by way of greater boiler pressures, higher piston speeds and further savings were extracted from the introduction of lighter and smaller engines which released space for increased cargo capacity. Moreover, as cargo capacity expanded there was a reduction in the number of stokers needed to fire the boilers in order to maintain a particular speed between ports of call.

"Other innovations also enhanced the performance of cargo-carrying ships during these decades of rapid technological advance, notably the installation of superheaters, which again permitted notable reductions in fuel consumption, and the more widespread introduction of forced draught, a feature of an American auxiliary steamer as early as 1845 or 1846, but not widely adopted until much later. By the 1880s it was claimed that forced draught could reduce the consumption of coal by as much as 15 per cent, but no less important, it could mean that coal of much poorer quality (therefore costing less) could be utilized in steamships."²⁹

By 1890, the economies achieved with the adoption of the triple-expansion marine engine were widely acknowledged and adopted by British and foreign shipping companies. This was particularly the case for cargo-passenger liners and tramp ships.³⁰ Strong claims were being made that as a result of these developments in engine design the fuel economy in cargo ships was approximately twenty per cent higher than in 1880. Throughout the eighteen-nineties, this superiority over earlier steamships and, of course, sailing ships was to continue:

"By the 1890s prodigies of economy had been attained in ordinary cargo steamers. *Oscar II*, a trunk-decked vessel built by William Gray & Co. of West Hartlepool in 1891, could carry 4,600 tons deadweight³¹ of cargo or 14 tons of coal per day at 9 knots, this being equal to coal consumption of half an ounce of coal per ton per knot, scarcely more than the energy released by the burning of a couple of sheets of writing paper."³²

FIGURE 3



Source: Adapted from a figure in D. Butcher, 'The Trawlerman',
Tops 1 Books, Reading, 1980, p.21.

Given the cost involved in the construction and development of the steamship and the unevenness of its acceptance and utilisation, it is not surprising that the British fishing industry, as it was structured and financed, in the late nineteenth century did not adopt readily and rapidly the steam trawler as a worthwhile investment in technological adaptation, as is the case of the maritime transport industry:

"Despite what has often been said, the 19th century did not see a 'long battle' between sail and steam. For the first 50 years of her life.....the steamship presented no real competition to the sailing vessel. She provided entirely new services on short-range high density passenger routes; she assisted the sailing vessel as a tug, and as a heavily subsidized mail and passenger carrier on the Atlantic and eastern routes; she provided a service which did not exist before. But she could not compete with the mass of sailing vessels which carried the growing trade of the world until the development of the compound engine in the middle of the 1860s (sic)."³³

The steamship that first performed an immediate and direct role vis-a-vis sailing fishing vessels was the paddle-wheel steam tug. More significantly, the introduction of the steam trawler, concurrently with the expansion of harbour facilities, adjoining railway sidings, improvements in the preservation of the catch and changes in the technology of fishing gear had a pronounced effect on the structure of the catching sector of the industry, in terms of patterns of ownership and control of social relationships on board the vessels and on shore.³⁵ For some smack owners it meant economic ruin within a few years and for their employees, it accentuated their powerlessness at a time of

comprehensive structural and organisational change.³⁶

It is to the early experiments and developments in steam trawlers that we next turn.

Both the Humber ports of Grimsby and Hull experienced substantial growth and expansion in their fishing fleets, fishing industries and ancillary trades in the last half of the nineteenth century. In 1854, for example, the total weight of fish catches landed in Grimsby amounted to some 9,060 cwts.; in 1902 the total for the year was 3,310,200 cwts.³⁷ F.G. Aflalo, who conducted a survey of the fishing industry of England and Wales from 1901 to 1903 and whose book was published in 1904, observed that in Grimsby in 1903:

"Every day of the year the railway company despatches between two and three hundred waggon loads of fish..... On the Wednesday before Good Friday 1903, the company despatched the enormous total of 1,153 tons (23,160 cwts.) in 372 waggon loads, carrying 19,762 large and 4,651 small packages."³⁸

Quite the overwhelming proportion of this annual catch figure for Grimsby, after the turn of the century was caught by the burgeoning fleet of steam trawlers. By 1903, the sailing trawlers had all but disappeared from the port.³⁹

Until the late eighteen-eighties, by which time the steam trawlers were beginning to make an appearance in the port, Grimsby's fishing fleet of several hundred vessels comprised two main types, namely 'codmen' and trawlers (see Plate 1, p.143). The codmen were engaged mainly in catching cod, ling and other demersal species,

with the use of fishing lines rather than nets and hence such vessels were known as 'liners' (see Figure 2). For decades, simple techniques were used to catch the fish with hooks and lines. During the winter months long lines were used and for the rest of the year hand lines were employed.⁴⁰ A set of long lines, circa 1880, would consist of about 200 lines of approximately 30 fathoms in length and two or three lines were a 'piece'. Attached to each line was a number of 'snoods', that is, pieces of line about 30 inches in length which carried the hooks. Snoods were fastened at intervals of 8 or 12 feet depending on the number of hooks they carried. The lines were put together and they were often several miles in length with as many as 5,000 hooks which were usually baited with whelks.⁴¹

In contrast, hand lines were usually between 35 to 45 fathoms long and they had a lead weight of between 5 and 7lbs. attached. This weight had a wire strop fixed through one end and at each end of the 'sprawl wire', as it was called, was a snood and a single hook. The sailing smack would be hove-to when these lines were employed and each man worked his own line. It was not uncommon for a man to catch upwards of 400 cod in a day. Lining was also widely used by Scottish fishermen in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. These two methods of lining changed hardly at all in the latter half of the nineteenth century.⁴²

Another type of codman sailing from a number of English ports, as well as Grimsby, was the welled cod-smack. These

vessels were designed to catch and market live cod in prime condition. The well was an integral part of the vessel, constructed athwartships across the hull from the keels to the deck with two water-tight bulkheads which contained a relatively large compartment amidships into which a continuous supply and circulation of sea-water flowed through large auger holes bored at intervals below the waterline.⁴³ In the eighteen-sixties, the cost of a large welled cod smack was about one thousand, five hundred pounds.⁴⁴ Such a vessel had a crew of from nine to eleven men and youths, the latter being apprenticed in the nineteenth century, from the age of fourteen upwards. There is considerable evidence that boys of twelve were frequently cajoled into this work by both vessel-owners and agencies of the state.⁴⁵

Grimsby sailing smacks or trawl smacks, in common with many other vessels from British ports, towed a triangular, bag-shaped net along the sea-bed. The overwhelming majority of these smacks used the beam-trawl (see Figure 3, p.132) which again has a long history. E.J. March has observed:

"Generally speaking the design of a beam trawl was the same all round the coast with local variations in the size and shape of head irons, whose weight differed according to depth of water and strength of tides on the fishing grounds."⁴⁶

A heavy wooden beam, varying in length from twenty feet to fifty feet and made of ash, beech, elm, greenheart or oak, kept the mouth of the net open. At either end of the beam the trawl heads, or head irons, moved along the

sea-bed and their vertical length determined the distance between the beam, and hence the top of the net, and the sea-floor. This height was not, however, any more than three to four feet so it was at its most useful when fishing for, say, sole and plaice which tend to bury themselves in the sand in order to avoid danger; other demersal species⁴⁷ were caught but it was a cumbersome, difficult procedure to shoot and haul the gear from the deck of a sailing vessel. Beam trawlers are still to be seen fishing, usually for sole and plaice, in the North Sea. Most of those so engaged are from Dutch fishing ports and frequently land their catches in English ports.⁴⁸ The Grimsby cod smacks usually carried a crew of ten or eleven men and youths, the latter, again known as apprentices, numbered up to five or six. They were regarded by smack-owners as a low-cost labour resource at a time of considerable industrial expansion.⁴⁹

The customary practice in the first half of the nineteenth century was for these fishing vessels to operate as single fishing units (or 'single boaters') but gradually, in the English east coast ports in particular, this was largely superseded by the 'fleeting' system of fishing activities. It became the practice of the larger companies of smack owners to keep their fleets at sea and to transport their catches to the fishing ports or Billingsgate market in London⁵⁰ by a fast 'carrier' or cutter.⁵¹ The practice was established of maintaining the fleet on the fishing grounds for approximately eight

weeks with an intervening rest period of one week in the home port.⁵² This practice was first introduced by a large firm, Samuel Hewett and Company, in the Essex port of Barking and it quickly spread to the ports of Yarmouth, Grimsby, Hull and North Shields. A fleet of smacks often numbered upwards of two hundred under the authority of a company, or fleet 'admiral'.⁵³

A pronounced advantage of this system of fleetting for the smack-owners was that maximum use was made of the vessels' catching gear and capacity in contrast to 'single boating' or 'single tripping' which involved vessels returning independently and singly to port thus spending a good deal of, otherwise profitable, time running to and from the ports to the fishing grounds. Fleetting was then most popular amongst the smack-owners and highly unpopular with the crews of the vessels. The former regarded the practice in such a favourable light that contrary to promises made initially to the latter, they introduced at Hull and Grimsby the practice of winter fleetting which, given the material environment, increased the discomfort and dangers of their employees.⁵⁴

For the fishermen there were considerable and additional hardships to be suffered because of the system of fleetting. It meant that they were at sea for much longer periods than hitherto. For example, during summer fleetting, which was generally accepted to run from March to September, the vessels remained at the fishing grounds for eight to twelve weeks. This

not only meant that the crews had to work for longer periods in extremely uncomfortable, often dangerous, conditions without shore leave but they also had to work longer hours since there was little or no 'down time' except in severe weather conditions or when sailing to and from the fishing grounds. Moreover, the men were exposed to additional hardship and danger when fleeting for they had to convey their vessel's catch to the carriers. This could only be carried out by using the vessel's boat, which was frequently in a dilapidated, if not unseaworthy, condition and hence numerous lives were lost in this highly dangerous task of transporting the boxes of fish from the smack to the carrier. In the North Sea in 1882, twelve men were drowned ferrying catches to the carriers; in 1884 twenty-four men were lost whilst performing this task. Matters improved somewhat after 1891 when the Board of Trade issued regulations concerning the adoption of buoyancy test tanks on these small boats.⁵⁵

Considerable hostility was aroused in Grimsby and Hull by the decision of smack owners to introduce a system of winter fleeting in the late eighteen-seventies. For the employers, it made economic sense to send their fleets to sea, from October, for similar periods of eight weeks or so. This decision was vehemently opposed by the skippers, mates and senior fishermen who were beginning to form trade unions to better defend themselves, they believed, against their employers. The emergence of the trade unions in the fishing industry will be discussed in Chapter 5 but two observations are made here; first,

maritime historians concerned with technological and organisational change within the fishing industry in the late nineteenth century tend to pay little attention to the tensions in the industry's employment relationships during the period preceding the establishment of the steam trawler fleets and secondly, with the system of fleetting, particularly winter fleetting, the increasing physical hardships and dangers experienced by the fishermen clearly became significant factors in the deteriorating relationships between employers and employees.^{56,57.}

However, a number of smack-owners were deeply concerned with the dangers attendant upon the system of winter fleetting. Speaking at a protest meeting in Hull, organised by Hull fishermen, a Grimsby smack-owner, H. Hepton, stated:

"In the fleetting system a large proportion of the money which ought to go in wages was turned into other channels. In the Hull and Grimsby districts the average annual loss (of men) was 127, which was higher than in other districts where fleetting was not practised. Fleetting is a great risk to life and my advice is that you must stick together and then you will win."⁵⁸

Two factors of significance in the growth of the English fishing industry in the nineteenth century were the expansion of the railway networks and the increasing use made of ice as a means of better preserving the condition of fish catches.⁵⁹ The growth of Grimsby as a major fishing port was encouraged by the establishment of a railway network which linked the port to the large industrial/urban regions in the West Riding of Yorkshire

and South Lancashire (the link between Grimsby and Sheffield was developed as early as 1848 by the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company), and, also, with London (the Great Northern Railway Company carried a line through to Grimsby in 1848). This improvement in transportation services together with the widening practice of using ice as a preservative resulted in a great increase in the consumption of fish throughout England and Wales and, indeed the whole of Britain.⁶⁰

D. Boswell has observed:

"This expansion (of the railways and the use of ice) allowed a large and important white fish industry to develop alongside, and eventually to overtake in importance, the long established drift fisheries for herring and pilchards, which had long used techniques of drying, salting and smoking to preserve their catches in marketable condition."⁶¹

Apart from the use of packing boxes of Irish salmon with it, the use of ice as a preservative for fish catches on board vessels did not become a common practice until well into the nineteenth century. However, once smack-owners became aware of the advantages of ice, in that it both allowed the vessel to stay on the fishing grounds for longer periods and enabled the fish to be better preserved from being caught to the point of sale to the consumer, thousands of tons of ice were imported from the Scandinavian countries:

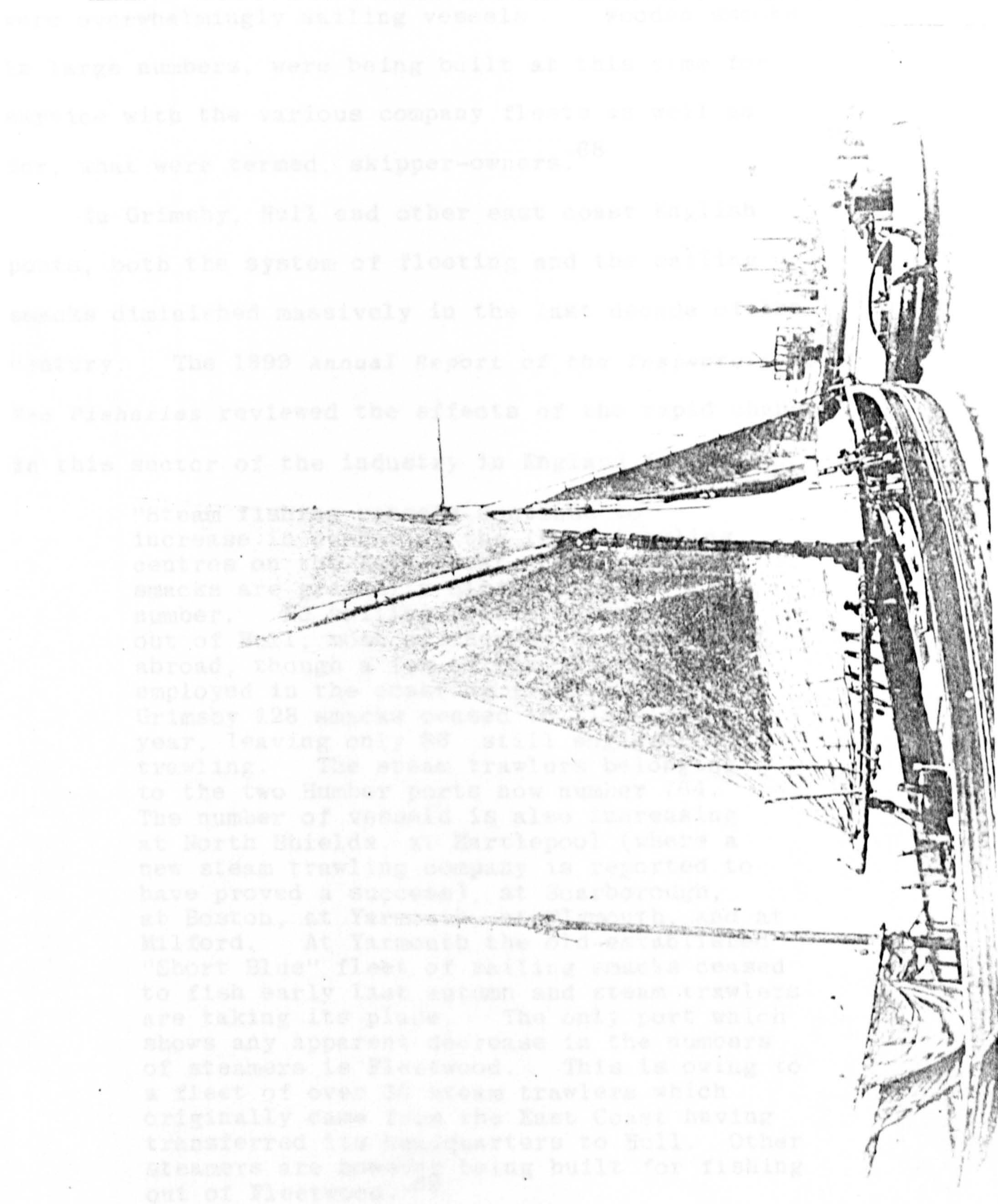
"By 1872 Hull was importing 16,000 to 20,000 tons of ice a year, mostly in foreign sailing ships, but the ice companies soon ran vessels of their own. In 1874 the 261-ton brigatine *Beagle* and in 1876 the 317-ton brigatine *Charlie Blackwood* were built at Prince

Edward Island for the Hull Ice Co., while the 274-ton barque *Fanny Bresingues*, built at Stonehouse in 1871, belonged to the Albert Dock Ice Co., and by 1877 six ships were employed as well as several foreign vessels."⁶²

This growing reliance upon railway transport and the use of ice encouraged sailing trawler-owners to send their vessels to more distant, and it was hoped, less heavily harvested fishing grounds.⁶³ These two factors led, *inter alia*, to the demise of the welled cod-smack and the building of ice-making factories and other ancillary processes.⁶⁴ Thus the growth in the market for the product stimulated the capitalisation of both the catching sector and the onshore activities and enterprises of the industry.⁶⁵ In the former it proved to be the stimulus for the rapid and substantial increase in trawling as a method of capturing demersal fish and it undoubtedly brought about the system of fleetings in the North Sea fishing grounds; in the latter it gave rise to a large number of ancillary industrial enterprises.⁶⁶ An editorial in a contemporary Hull newspaper put it thus:

"It has been estimated that the number of British deep sea trawlers may be taken at 3,000. Taking the average catch (annual) of each of these at 100 tons, we have a total weight of 300,000 tons, and this, at £10 to £12 a ton, gives us the annual money value of the fish caught by the deep sea trawlers of over £3,000,000. The capital invested in floating and shore property in producing this has been put down at not less than £15,000,000. There are ice ships, ice houses (where the natural ice was stored), steam carriers, storing houses, curing houses, etc. Each vessel carries a crew of five or six hands and some a greater number. The development of railway communication has also been a great means of extending the trade."⁶⁷

A Grimsby Sailing Trawler circa 1885.



Source: Original photograph is in the Fishing Archives,
Grimsby Central Library, Grimsby.

The deep sea trawlers referred to in this editorial were overwhelmingly sailing vessels. . . . Wooden smacks, in large numbers, were being built at this time for service with the various company fleets as well as for, what were termed, skipper-owners.⁶⁸

In Grimsby, Hull and other east coast English ports, both the system of fleetings and the sailing smacks diminished massively in the last decade of the century. The 1899 *Annual Report of the Inspectors on Sea Fisheries* reviewed the effects of the rapid changes in this sector of the industry in England and Wales.

"Steam fishing vessels continue to increase in number at the large trawling centres on the East Coast. The sailing smacks are gradually diminishing in number. No sailing trawlers now work out of Hull, most of them having been sold abroad, though a few of the largest are employed in the coasting trade. At Grimsby 128 smacks ceased to fish last year, leaving only 86 still engaged in trawling. The steam trawlers belonging to the two Humber ports now number 764. The number of vessels is also increasing at North Shields, at Hartlepool (where a new steam trawling company is reported to have proved a success), at Scarborough, at Boston, at Yarmouth, at Plymouth, and at Milford. At Yarmouth the old-established "Short Blue" fleet of sailing smacks ceased to fish early last autumn and steam trawlers are taking its place. The only port which shows any apparent decrease in the numbers of steamers is Fleetwood. This is owing to a fleet of over 30 steam trawlers which originally came from the East Coast having transferred its headquarters to Hull. Other steamers are however being built for fishing out of Fleetwood."⁶⁹

The growth in the number of steam trawlers in England and Wales in the period 1890 to 1899 and their geographical location is shown in Table 1, p.145. It is readily

TABLE 1

The Growth in the Number of Steam Fishing Vessels
in England and Wales in the Period 1890 to 1899a

Port of Registration	1890		1893		1896		1899	
	Number	Average Tonnage	Number	Average Tonnage	Number	Average Tonnage	Number	Average Tonnage
Boston	15	15	30	53	30	58	32	55
Bristol	3	47	7	48	7	48	7	48
Fleetwood ^b	-	-	-	-	8	43	4	42
Grimsby	50	56	138	62	230	56	419	59
Hartlepool	2	11	3	8	2	11	10	27
Hull	79	62	169	58	241	60	376	60
Liverpool	5	46	6	44	10	43	10	45
London ^c	20	98	25	82	27	91	35	81
Lowestoft	1	32	1	32	1	32	3	27
Milford	2	52	12	47	24	41	36	43
Plymouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	60
Rye	3	18	3	15	3	15	2	10
Scarborough	18	29	16	24	19	23	18	24
Sunderland	13	26	10	25	6	26	13	25
Yarmouth	-	-	3	41	7	39	17	34
Tyne Ports	89	13	113	17	114	17	118	21
All other ports	38	-	26	-	19	-	13	-
	338		562		748		1116	

Source: Derived from the Fourteenth Annual Report of the Inspectors on Sea Fisheries (England and Wales), for the year 1899, Table C, p.8.

a. Not all of these vessels were steam trawlers; the smaller ones in the Tyne ports, for example, were liners or drifters.

b. In 1897, Fleetwood had 36 vessels, average 49 tons, which were transferred to Hull.

c. Most of these London registered vessels were steam carriers employed in conveying fish from the fleets to London.

apparent that the bulk of the expansion took place at the two Humber ports and in North Shields. There were sound topographical and economic reasons for such a concentration.⁷⁰ Some coastal harbours were quite unsuitable for an expanding fleet of relatively large vessels, in terms of access and egress at low water or in poor weather conditions.⁷¹ F.G. Aflalo defined good harbours in this passage:

"The qualifications of a fishery harbour are somewhat more complicated than those of harbours devoted solely to passenger or mail traffic. Proximity to the actual fishing grounds is of less importance in this age of steam than was the case when the red winged fleets crept home to port with each day's catch..... (among) necessary conditions of prosperity, accessibility to Billingsgate by a direct route, easy entry and exit at all stages of the tide, ample accommodation and frontage, covered wharves and markets, and cheap supplies of coal, salt, ice, and fresh water..... The seven coming nearest to these requirements are North Shields, Hull, Grimsby, Lowestoft, Plymouth, Milford, and Fleetwood.⁷²

In addition some of these ports, e.g. North Shields, Hull and Grimsby derived solid economic advantages from being reasonably accessible to coal-mining areas.

In this continuing development of the industry, the railways continued to play a decisive role. For example, the fishing industry was seen as a lucrative market by the railway companies; they owned some of the harbours and fish markets in the larger ports of Fleetwood, Grimsby, Hull and Lowestoft. The transportation of fish, given the powerful position of the railway companies, vis-a-vis other modes of transport and the perishable nature of the product,

TABLE 2

A Comparison of the Increase in the Number
of Steam Trawlers with the Decrease in
the Number of Sailing Trawlers
Registered at Grimsby 1889-1899

Year	Sailing Trawlers	Steam Trawlers	Total
1889	730	33	766
1890	625	50	675
1891	614	96	710
1892	655	112	767
1893	664	138	802
1894	608	165	773
1895	543	189	732
1896	413	230	643
1897	371	288	659
1898	269	370	639
1899	86	419	505

Source: Figures obtained from the
Annual Reports of the Inspectors on Sea Fisheries
(England and Wales) for the years 1889-1899.

provided much needed revenue and this was reflected in the service given to the catchers and the wholesale markets:

"So immense is the daily transport of fish in this country that all the great railway companies keep special departments busily occupied with this branch of business alone."⁷³

Towards the very end of the century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Grimsby experienced major expansion in the number of steam trawlers registered at the port and a substantial contraction in the number of sailing vessels (see Table 2, p. 147). This occurred in circumstances in which:

".....the owners and masters of the Grimsby fishing fleet must have had some knowledge of the applications of this new technology and yet, in the main, they seemed unprepared for the new development when it finally came."⁷⁴

D. Boswell, along with other historians, does not explain the reasons for this conservative reaction at a time of comprehensive technological and economic change. This slow reaction was perhaps a manifestation of the powerlessness of some of the smack owners, skippers and crews to shape or influence the situation. An analysis of the reactions of these groups to the changes they encountered will be made in Chapters 4 and 5.

In Scotland and, more especially Aberdeen, in the late nineteenth century, certain similarities with the Humber ports are readily discernible.⁷⁵ There were also pronounced differences between Scotland and England and Wales. The former, for example, was historically much

more deeply involved with the herring fishery than the latter,⁷⁶ even although herring were important to the English ports of North Shields and Lowestoft and to the Isle of Man; but in Scotland the herring was a particularly significant product for numerous communities and, as reported by the Fishery Board for Scotland, this was to remain the case until well into the twentieth century:

"The total quantity of fish landed in Scotland in 1903 (exclusive of shell-fish) was 6,518,808 cwts., of the value (including shell-fish) of £2,474,885, as against 6,866,028 cwts. of total value £2,580,619 in 1902. The decrease was entirely in the herring fishing, which is the most variable and fluctuating, though, at the same time, the most important, branch of the Scottish fisheries."⁷⁷

Whilst the importance of the herring fishery continued, the white fish industry in Scotland experienced substantial growth during the last few years of the nineteenth century (see Table 3, p.150 for a comparison of the catches of white fish and herring and their respective values during the period 1894 to 1903). Table 3 also demonstrates the fact that the white fish were a commercially valuable product for the catching sector of the industry. As in England the use of ice and railway transportation were important, if not decisive factors, for a small number of what came to be known as white fish ports.

Traditionally the white fish catches landed in Scottish ports, by Scottish fishing vessels, had been caught by sailing liners (see Fig.2, p.124) which ranged in size from quite small inshore boats propelled by oars

TABLE 3

Growth in the Landings and Value of
White Fish at Scottish Ports compared with
the Landings and Value of Herring
for the Years 1894-1903

White Fish^a

Year	Cwts.	Value
1894	1,835,830	£790,957
1895	2,011,349	839,794
1896	2,143,947	890,126
1897	2,009,582	913,687
1898	1,842,430	923,346
1899	1,923,175	1,040,110
1900	1,834,498	1,074,600
1901	2,024,867	1,166,919
1902	2,976,580	1,133,088
1903	2,168,973	1,145,887

Herring^b

Year	Cwts.	Value
1894	4,333,925	£770,511
1895	4,007,466	918,923
1896	3,960,281	673,687
1897	2,965,965	707,555
1898	4,703,641	952,402
1899	3,207,078	1,143,296
1900	3,520,216	1,243,407
1901	4,338,635	1,061,034
1902	4,753,944	1,360,492
1903	4,279,485	1,244,656

Source: *Twenty-Second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the year 1903, Edinburgh, 1904, pp.vii and ix.*

- a "The term 'white fish' is generally meant to refer to cod, haddock, ling, whiting, saithe, plaice, halibut, turbot and other demersal species.
- b The figures for 1903 do not include 1,666,928 cwts. of herrings, value £213,462, landed at English ports by Scottish fishing vessels and 60,928 cwts., value £21,967, landed at Irish ports by Scottish vessels, these being 39 and 31 per cent respectively of the total.

to the large 'Fifies' and 'Zulus' which were often some fifty-five feet in length.⁷⁸ Again, as in England, steam fishing vessels played an increasingly important role as the nineteenth century ended but given their numbers in relation to sailing vessels in 1903, their introduction at that time could not be said to constitute a technological revolution.⁷⁹ Table 4, p. 152 shows that the steam trawlers, liners and drifters were, in terms of numbers if not in value, a small proportion of the total Scottish fishing fleet at the turn of the century. An examination of the table does, however, reveal certain trends; for example, a continuing decline of sailing vessels, over two thousand in ten years, an increase in the value of those sailing vessels remaining, and a substantial increase in the number of steam fishing vessels.⁸⁰

At the beginning of the twentieth century the steam-engined vessels engaged in the white-fish fisheries in Scotland represented less than ten per cent of the total white-fish fishing vessels and yet they were the dominant force in terms of weight of catches landed and their value (see Table 5, p.155). A significant feature of the steam trawler fleets in Scotland was that, with the exception of Greenock, they were registered in and operated from the two east coast ports of Aberdeen and Granton (Leith) and this geographical clustering of the fleets was to remain the case (see Table 7, p. 161). This concentration in Aberdeen and the Forth port had been acknowledged in

TABLE 4

The Number of and Value of Scottish
Fishing Vessels in the Period:
1894-1903

Year	Sailing Vessels		Steam Vessels			
			Trawlers		Liners & Drifters	
	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value
1894	13,138	£640,564	115	£334,670	44	£ 67,506
1895	12,940	651,668	112	349,800	46	72,030
1896	11,878	675,952	109	326,870	53	117,290
1897	11,459	687,040	117	359,140	57	125,480
1898	11,386	706,855	149	491,440	41	84,535
1899	11,004	764,515	207	783,440	44	82,780
1900	10,973	831,670	232	938,740	70	145,490
1901	10,848	888,041	256	1,060,205	97	200,910
1902	10,722	944,814	275	1,185,825	100	205,620
1903	10,572	994,552	280	1,216,423	156	355,915

Source: *Twenty-Second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the year 1903, p. v.*

the report of the Fishery Board for the year 1893:

"One of the features of this return . is the fact that the trawlers on the East Coast are propelled solely by steam, while wind supplies the motive power on the West Coast.....Aberdeen occupied, in so far as Scottish vessels are concerned, the premier place in the year under review, her trawlers representing in numbers 53 per cent, and the men employed 54 per cent of the aggregate returns for the East Coast. The only other district which approached Aberdeen was Leith whose respective percentages were 36, 35, 35 and 35 per cent."⁸¹

It was the case, however, that over the next few years, as a white fish port, Aberdeen drew far ahead of Granton in terms of weight and value of landings. Table 7, p.161, reflects the importance of Aberdeen as a steam trawler port in comparison with the Forth port and others. As a white fish port, Aberdeen was by 1890 quite different from what it was in 1880.⁸² In 1890, for example, over 250,000 cwt. of white fish were landed and this growth continued.⁸³ In 1893 there were 38 steam trawlers registered at the port and, in addition, there were 37, registered at other ports, which regularly sailed from and landed their catches at Aberdeen. In contrast, Granton in 1893 had 26 steam trawlers and there were five operating out of Anstruther. By 1903, the white fish landings at Aberdeen were in excess of 1,200,000 cwts.. Table 6, p. 156 charts the changing and, for some groups, the growing fortunes of Aberdeen. Ten years later in 1913 the landings had doubled and so too had the value of the catches:

"The progress of the fisheries.....during the year 1913 surpassed that of all its predecessors in respect of the quantity and value of fish landed. The total catch including herring, white fish and the landing of foreign vessels, amounted to 2,685,685 cwts., valued at £1,487,828, an increase of 211,215 cwts. in quantity and £237,892 in value, when compared with the catch in 1912, which was the previous record year."⁸⁴

Aberdeen had consolidated its premier position in Scotland as a white fish port in the early eighteen-nineties with some twenty per cent of the nation's landings; in 1913 this share of the Scottish catch had risen to fully seventy per cent.⁸⁵ These changes in the economic circumstances of the port were brought about, as in the Humber ports, by a combination of complementary factors, namely the growth in the steam trawler fleet, an expansion of harbour facilities and ancillary services, and a continuing improvement in the distribution by railway networks of the product. The increase in the number of steam trawlers operating from the port is outlined in Table 7, p. 161. In addition, Aberdeen was to gain important advantages from rich fishing grounds which for steam trawlers were only a few hours steaming time away.⁸⁶ This meant that vessels registered in other ports, sailed to Aberdeen with their catches and, hence, assisted the development of onshore facilities and services. This initial growth of the port, as a market centre, aided by the introduction of a daily auction of the catches which worked to the benefit of both locally registered and migrant-visitors' vessels in the matter of good prices for their produce, supported the enlargement of the curing and processing sectors of the industry.⁸⁷

TABLE 5

A Comparison of the Landings and Values
of White Fish Catches Obtained from the
Two Principal Methods of Fishing Gear
Employed by Steam and Sailing Vessels

Steam Trawlers

Year	No. of Vessels	Catch	
		Quantity	Value
		Cwts.	£
1896	109	548,292	303,772
1897	117	588,165	339,319
1898	149	778,731	449,278
1899	207	980,396	597,743
1900	232	1,073,164	699,587
1901	256	1,325,072	820,813
1902	275	1,465,073	812,229
1902	280	1,566,370	829,932

Steam and Sail Liners

Year	No. of Vessels		Catch	Value
	Steam	Sail		
			Cwts.	£
1898	39	5715	1,050,000	470,000
1899	38	5512	939,000	440,000
1900	52	5404	757,000	371,000
1901	75	5367	696,000	341,000
1902	68	5154	608,700	318,300
1903	91	4884	602,600	315,900

TABLE 6Landings and Catches of Vessels at Aberdeen in 1903

Type of Vessel	Number of Landings	Quantity Cwts.	Value £	Average Quantity per Landing	Average Price per Cwt.
Trawl Vessels	9,423	1,200,390	637,568	127.4	10s.7½d.
Steam Liners	1,617	118,305	78,848	73.2	13s.4d.
Sailing Liners	242	6,281	2,826	26.0	9s.0d.
Small Line Vessels	7,651	22,158	12,465	2.9	11s.3d.
Herring Vessels	4,447	319,808	87,254	71.9	5s.5½d.

Source: *Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the year 1903*, p.x/ii. The Board commented in this report: "Trawlers are the mainstay of the Aberdeen fishing industry with over 72 per cent of the catch and nearly 78 per cent of the value of the landings." (p.x/i)

Both the Aberdeen Harbour Board and the Town Council acknowledged the need to provide efficient facilities if the industry was to expand along similar lines to those experienced by Hull and Grimsby. In 1889, the *Fish Trades Gazette* commended both parties for their efforts in constructing a new fish dock in the port:

"A new fish market at Aberdeen.....was opened on Monday. It is situated at the north-west corner of Albert Basin of Aberdeen harbour, directly east of the line of harbour street (sic), and a new wharf for the landing of fish has been erected just alongside, the basin having been dredged to a depth of ten feet of water at low tide. The market building has cost about £3,600, and the wharf about £4,000, while the formation of a railway siding and making of the ground cost about £2,000 additional. The total cost has been nearly £10,000, of which about £4,000 is paid by the Town Council and £6,000 by the Harbour Board. Over a dozen trawlers landed their cargoes at the market on Monday, and in the course of the day the Lord Provost and Town Council attended and performed the opening ceremony, the Provost declaring they would not find the market equalled in any part of the Kingdom, while Treasurer Walker remarked that Aberdeen was coming to the centre of the fish trade of the North-East Coast of Scotland. The Lord Provost and Council were mobbed by the fishwives demanding 'ansel' as was everybody who entered the market." 88

As with the Humber ports, the construction of a covered fish market with an adjoining railway siding was a major improvement in that the fish could be landed almost directly from the vessels to the railway waggons that would transport it to Edinburgh, London and elsewhere. A report in the *Fish Trades Gazette* commented: !

"The early hours of yesterday saw the arrival in London of a notable train. It carried no passengers, but was loaded with fish, and travelled direct from Aberdeen at high speed. Every day through the season, saving Saturdays and Sundays, this new special fish train will leave Aberdeen at two o'clock in the afternoon, arriving in London at four o'clock in the morning, thus making it possible that fish caught in the northern seas shall be on the London breakfast table the next day, certainly in good time for luncheon, or dinner." 89

Despite the enthusiasm of the trade newspaper for this railway service it was not extensively used for a few years but it assisted the development of the port.

For a number of years, the curing process, particularly of haddocks, for distribution and sale in west-central Scotland, remained a significant element in the Aberdeen fishing industry. 90

There were frequent complaints concerning the overcrowding at the port and the inadequate facilities provided therein. 91 One major problem concerned the local supply of ice which was extensively used by the steam trawlers which, by the mid-eighteen-nineties, were making forty voyages or more. However, a third ice-making factory was opened at the end of 1898 and the resultant increase in supply quelled the complaints. 92 Over the years a number of extensions were added to the fish market and in 1903 work commenced on yet another extension that, in the words of the Fishery Board's annual report for that year :

".....will bring the total length of the market up to over 700 yards, which will afford quay and market space for 40 steam vessels at one time. Another improvement is also under progress, the

north bank of the River Dee at Pointlaw is being wharved for a space of 750 feet at an estimated cost of £20,229." 93

In 1886 there were some 440 fishermen in Aberdeen, in 1913 their numbers had grown to 3,023, the overwhelming majority of whom were employed on the steam trawlers. The Fishery Board in its report for the year observed that there had been a slight decrease in the number of steam trawlers but:

".....it is plain that the fleet is more powerful than it was a year ago, as the total tonnage shows an increase of 445 tons. The older boats are being discarded, and larger and more powerful and more efficient vessels are being added, and those factors are then sufficient to compensate for the small decrease in number. In addition there are thirty-four German and English steam trawlers using Aberdeen as their home port." 94

In 1913, in addition to the large-scale curing trade, the catches of Aberdeen trawlers, which now regularly fished at Faroe and Iceland between the months of March and July, were now processed in the port and then distributed by way of the railway links to Glasgow, Liverpool, London and the English inland counties. 95

In brief, the factors of capacious port facilities, the active involvement of the railway companies, the railway networks, the widespread use of ice, assisted in the technological change of the catching sector of the industry. 96 This technological change manifested itself in the steam trawler fleets in the major fishing ports of Grimsby, Hull and Aberdeen and in what we might call the second division ports, for example, Granton,

North Shields, Boston, Fleetwood, and Milford Haven.⁹⁷

Yarmouth, on the other hand, with the economic collapse of the fleets of sailing smacks ceased to function as a trawler port in the early twentieth century.⁹⁸ A contemporary observer stated:

"Up to 1899 Messrs. Hewett controlled the largest fishing fleet in Great Britain, but on a cold windy day in 1901 the famous Short Blue flag fluttered down from the masthead of the admiral's flagship for the last time. The huge fleet of smacks lay moored at Garlestone Quay for a year or so, many were broken up, some were sold to foreign, mostly to Dutch, Belgian or Norwegian owners, and a few of the best were converted into ketches for the coasting trade. This closing down was a bad job for Yarmouth and it caused a great deal of distress and trouble, a large number of the crews left and went to Hull and Grimsby."⁹⁹

There was, however, a revival of the herring fishery in the southern North Sea and Yarmouth was the main beneficiary of this change so that a number of skippers, mates and fishermen who were displaced by the precipitous decline in the sailing trawler sector found employment on the steam drifters that were introduced to the port.¹⁰⁰

Between the years 1889 and 1900 some two thousand steam trawlers were built for the British fishing industry. That they represented a radical technological innovation and development was emphasised by their successful use of the beam trawl in landing catches that were three or four times larger than those of the sailing smacks; moreover, the introduction of the otter trawl (see Figure 4, p.171) and other related improvements in gear and equipment brought about an eight-fold increase in their efficiency as fishing vessels.¹⁰¹

TABLE 7

Location and Number of Scottish Steam Trawlers
in the Year 1913.^a

District East Coast	Number	Tonnage	Men Employed	Value of Vessels	Fishing Gear Value	Total Value
				£	£	£
Eyemouth	-	-	-	-	-	-
Leith	51	2,284	461	206,430	7,650	214,080
Anstruther	-	-	-	-	-	-
Montrose	9	280	72	22,250	1,350	23,600
Stonehaven	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aberdeen	236	13,960	2,310	1,011,900	33,040	1,044,940
Peterhead	7	491	63	29,400	980	
Fraserburgh	1	57	9	2,000	150	2,150
Banff	-	-	-	-	-	-
Findhorn	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cromarty						
Helmsdale						
Lybster						
Wick						
Total	304	17,172	2,915	1,271,980	43,170	1,315,150

Source: *Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the year 1913, Appendix A, Section No.1, p.18.*

a Greenock was the only other Scottish fishing port that had, at this moment, steam trawlers in operation; its comparable figures vis-a-vis this table were: 16 trawlers, 985 tons, 141 men, £79,400, £2,000 and £72,400.

An indication of the impact of the steam trawler, on contemporary observers, can be obtained from this extensive quotation from a report on a new trawler, built in Dundee in 1886, which appeared in a Hull newspaper:

"The new steam trawler *Euphrates* built by Mr. W.B. Thompson, of Dundee and Glasgow, for Mr. T. Hamling of Hull, a few days ago went out to sea for a trial of the machinery. The vessel left Dundee early in the forenoon.....and on passing the measured mile the speed of the *Euphrates* was found to be twelve miles per hour, although the boiler pressure was not up to its full limit. The engines which were built at Mr. Thompson's Tay Foundry, are compound condensing, of 38 nominal horse-power and fitted with all the most recent improvements. The cylinders are 15 inches and 27 inches diameter, with a stroke of 16 inches, the boiler pressure being 100 lbs. per square inch. The *Euphrates* will be employed trawling from Hull, and is completely equipped with trawling gear of the most improved description. She has been built to the highest class at Lloyds of iron and is 93 feet long, 20 feet broad and 10½ feet deep, with a registered tonnage of 102. On deck her fittings are of a very substantial character, including a powerful steam winch for working the trawling gear and cargo - large revolving bollards (one fitted as a capstan) conveniently placed to lead the trawling to the winch, and rollers on each side being placed to lead it through the bulwarks. Aft cast iron fairleads are fitted up for heaving up the after part of the trawl beam; and as this vessel has double sets of trawling gear working off each side, and fitted in a very complete manner, she may be regarded as the very best trawler built in this neighbourhood (i.e. Dundee, Author). A towing hook is also provided, so that she may be used as a tug-boat if necessary. Her rig is that of a fore and aft schooner, with two masts and a large spread of canvass. Anchors, chains, boat, lights, etc., have all been supplied, in accordance with the Board of Trade and Lloyds'

requirements. Under the main deck aft a very neatly finished cabin has been fitted up for the use of captain, mate and engineers, with every convenience for comfort that is usually found in much larger vessels. A large forecastle forward accommodates the crew and is fitted with all the necessary cooking arrangements. As the main use to which the vessel will be put necessitates plenty of space for the carriage of fish, the whole of the hold has been fitted up for this purpose with portable sub-division in which the fish are placed, while a large ice-room admits of a good supply of ice being carried in the forepart of the hold. The bunkers contain 40 tons of coal, and a fresh-water tank supplies the drinking water. Over the entrance to the engine room is placed the steering gear on a small bridge commanding an excellent outlook and on which is placed the telegraph to the engine room and steering compass, so that everything to facilitate the handling of the vessel can be controlled from this bridge. The chains from gear on bridge to tiller or rudder head are enclosed in an iron tube, thus keeping the chains secure from possible injury when working the trawl. Taken as a whole the *Euphrates* is very creditable to her builder and her smart appearance was the subject of much admiration." 102

Thus ten years after the first experiments in steam trawling were conducted using wooden paddle-wheel tugs, shipyards in Scotland and England were building scores of steam trawlers for the expanding fishing ports.¹⁰³ Some of those who had observed the early, often unsuccessful, attempts made by the steam paddle-tugs to operate beam or other trawls predicted that steam trawling would prove to be a commercial failure.¹⁰⁴ One authority, E. Holdsworth, prophesied, in his book, '*Deep Sea Fishing and Fishing Boats*' published in 1874, that steam would not

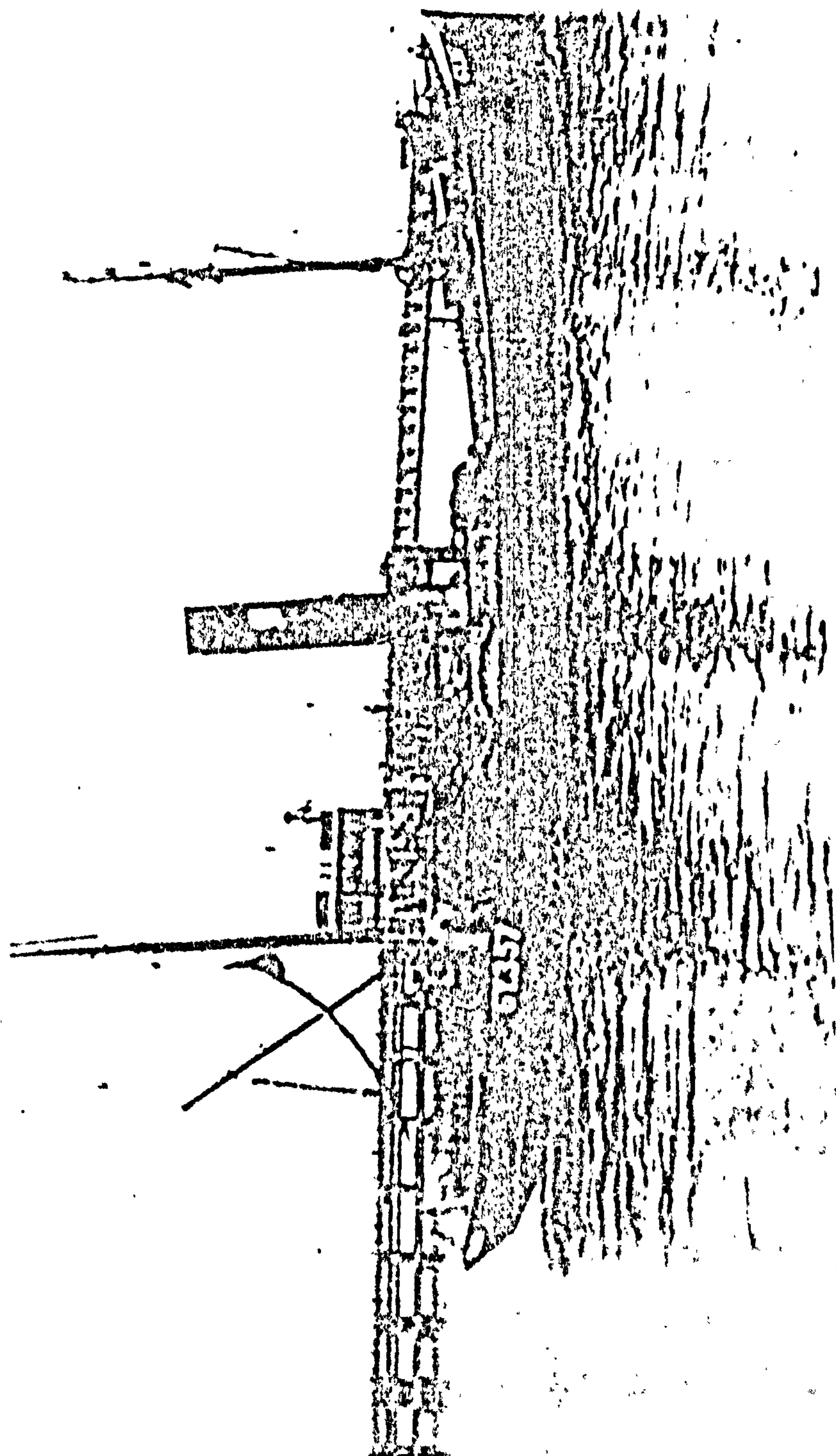
supersede sail in fishing vessels.¹⁰⁵ He also expressed the opinion that the otter trawl would not be a commercial success.¹⁰⁶

These predictions of the unlikely development and adoption of the steam trawlers and the use of otter trawls became the focus of a good deal of derisive comment within the fishing industry in a short space of time.¹⁰⁷ It appears that the French were among the first to employ the steam trawler. In 1864 a wooden fishing vessel was equipped with a steam engine and some two years later two iron steam trawlers were ordered from a shipbuilder at Govan on the Clyde and both of these vessels were still fishing fifty years later. Two other steam trawlers were commissioned from the Clydeside yard and a further three were built in Glasgow, Leith and Hull.¹⁰⁸ In 1881 the steam trawler *Zodiac* was built at Hull by Earles' Shipbuilding Company at a cost of some £3,500; the dimensions of this vessel were 93 feet in length with a 20 feet beam and a depth below deck of 10 feet, 65 net tonnage.¹⁰⁹ The owners of this vessel, The Grimsby and North Sea Steam Trawling Company, had a second iron screw steam trawler, the *Aries*, built at the Grimsby shipyard of T. Charlton and Company in 1882. Of similar length and tonnage to the *Zodiac*, the *Aries*, with compound surface condensing engine developing 35 horse-power cost £3,550 to construct.¹¹⁰

From 1882 onwards more and more orders were placed with shipyards in Scotland and England for steam trawlers.¹¹¹

PLATE 2

A Steam Trawler circa 1895. :



Source: Original photograph in the Fishing Archives,
Grimsby Public Library, Grimsby.

The first iron screw trawler to be built in Aberdeen, the *North Star*, was launched by John Duthie and Company in September 1883; the boiler and engine for the vessel were constructed by Hall, Russell and Company. As with the *Euphrates*, the *North Star* was fitted with the accoutrements to enable the vessel to work as a tug boat as well as a trawler.¹¹² The three Aberdeen shipyards of John Duthie and Company, Alexander Hall and Company and Hall, Russell and Company Ltd., were, from 1883, most active in this sector of steam vessel construction.¹¹³ Experiments in steam trawling using a wooden paddle-tug, the *Toiler*, with beam trawling gear had only begun at Aberdeen in March, 1882, and whilst the disadvantages of using a paddle-propelled vessel were readily acknowledged,¹¹⁴ the technological innovation of the iron screw steam trawler was, as already outlined, recognised fairly rapidly in terms of the investment of capital on such trawling ventures.¹¹⁵

It is clear from the Hull newspaper report of the new steam trawler, the *Euphrates*, that it possessed substantial advantages, for its owners, over the largest sailing trawler.¹¹⁶ For example, it was not, in its activities, as constrained as the sailing vessel by the vagaries of the weather, in that it could sail quite quickly to and from the immediate and quite distant fishing grounds and fish when the traditional vessel was becalmed because of lack of wind or confined to port due to severe weather conditions. C.L. Cutting observed that:

"The great disadvantage of sailing trawlers was their complete dependence on the wind and weather, both for their fishing operations and the return voyage with their catch. Gales could cause tremendous havoc and 360 smacks men and boys were lost in the 'Great March Gale' of 1883. Even more troublesome than the adverse winds and gales were the calms during which little or no headway could be made. The latter were particularly common in summer, when it was all the more important to ensure speedy arrival of the fish on account of the high temperature, with consequent rapid meltage of ice packed round the fish."¹¹⁷

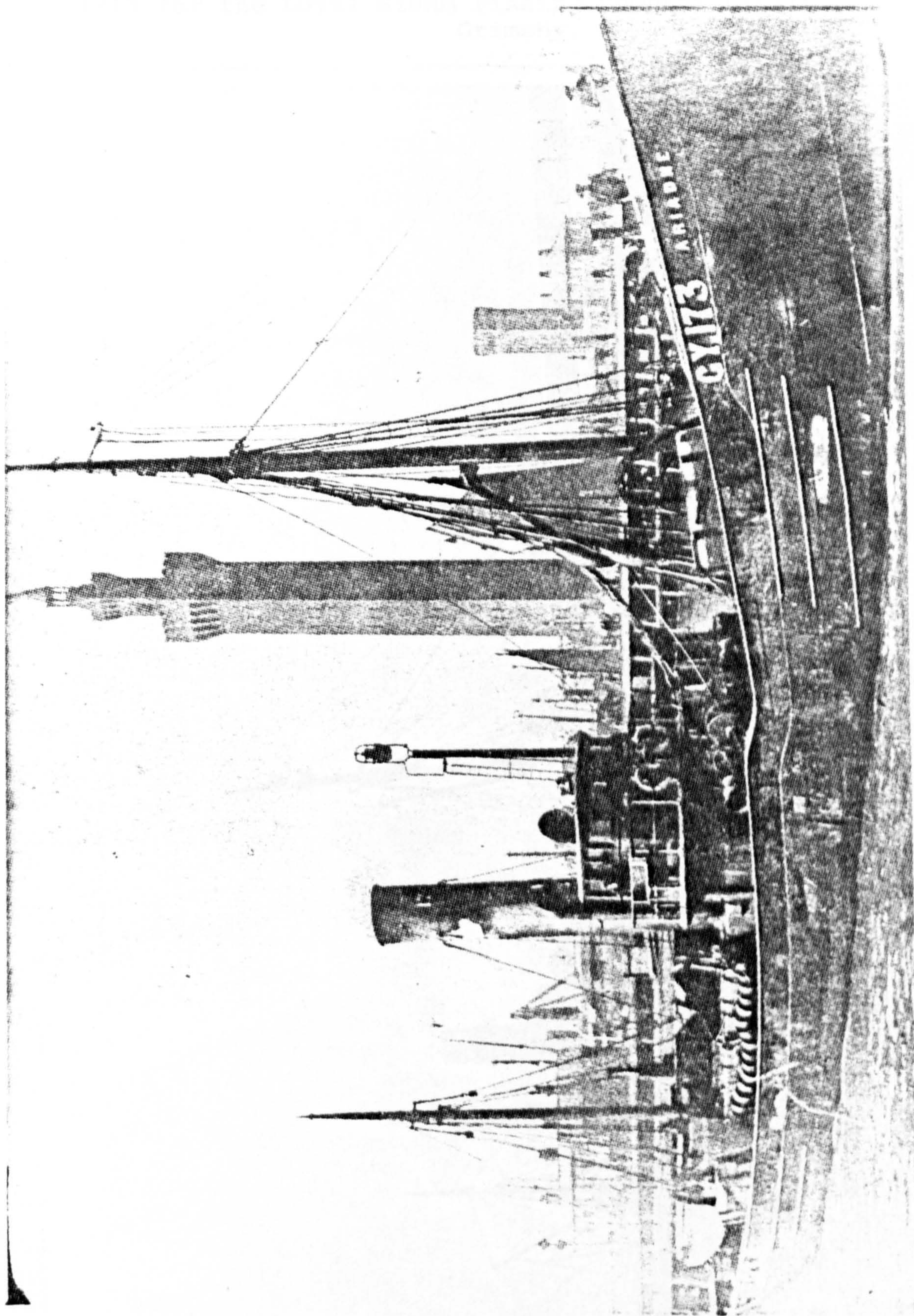
Unlike the sailing vessel, the steam trawler could be intensively operated throughout the whole year even although the tasks of shooting and hauling the fishing gear continued to be most hazardous and even dangerous for decades to come.¹¹⁸ In addition, the speed of the steam trawler, coupled with the liberal use of ice as a preservative, meant that the catch could be landed at the market in a reasonable condition.¹¹⁹ The provision of ice was most important since voyages became longer in duration as the demand for fresh white fish expanded.¹²⁰ Moreover, the use of ice proved advantageous to those Aberdeen steam trawlers, popularly known as 'scratchers', which worked the Aberdeen Ground and the Long Forties (see Map 3, page 129) and which returned to the port much more frequently than those vessels which operated around the Orkneys, Shetlands, Faroes and Iceland.¹²¹ In consequence, these scratchers earned a good reputation for the fine quality of their white fish catches.¹²²

Such advantages enjoyed by the operators of the early steam trawlers, *vis-a-vis* the sailing vessels, were

enhanced by the widespread adoption of the otter trawl in place of the beam trawl with which most were originally equipped.¹²³ Some of the very first experiments conducted with paddle-tugs did in fact use the otter trawl but there were technical problems associated with it and the first steam trawlers were almost always fitted out with the conventional beam trawl.¹²⁴ The use of the otter boards, or 'doors', set on a vertical plane and with their kite-like motion on the seabed when towed at a fairly slow pace by the trawler, permitted of a wider and much higher net mouth than the horizontal beam of the beam trawl (see Figure 4, p. 171). The catching efficiency of the steam trawlers, when using the otter trawl, improved by approximately twenty per cent since it was particularly efficacious in the ensnarement of those demersal species, such as cod and haddock, which often tend to swim some few feet above the seabed.¹²⁵ This superior efficiency of the steam trawlers could not be matched by the sailing vessels even although many of the latter were to survive in the smaller ports which enjoyed the advantages of nearby fishing grounds and, at the same time, were in many cases too small to accommodate large vessels. In the larger ports, however, it was an entirely different picture, with most of them experiencing for many years, a continuing growth in the numbers of steam trawlers and the quite rapid demise of the sailing trawler.¹²⁶

During the last decade of the nineteenth century and up to the beginning of the First World War, major

Changes in the Design and Construction of Steam
Trawlers.

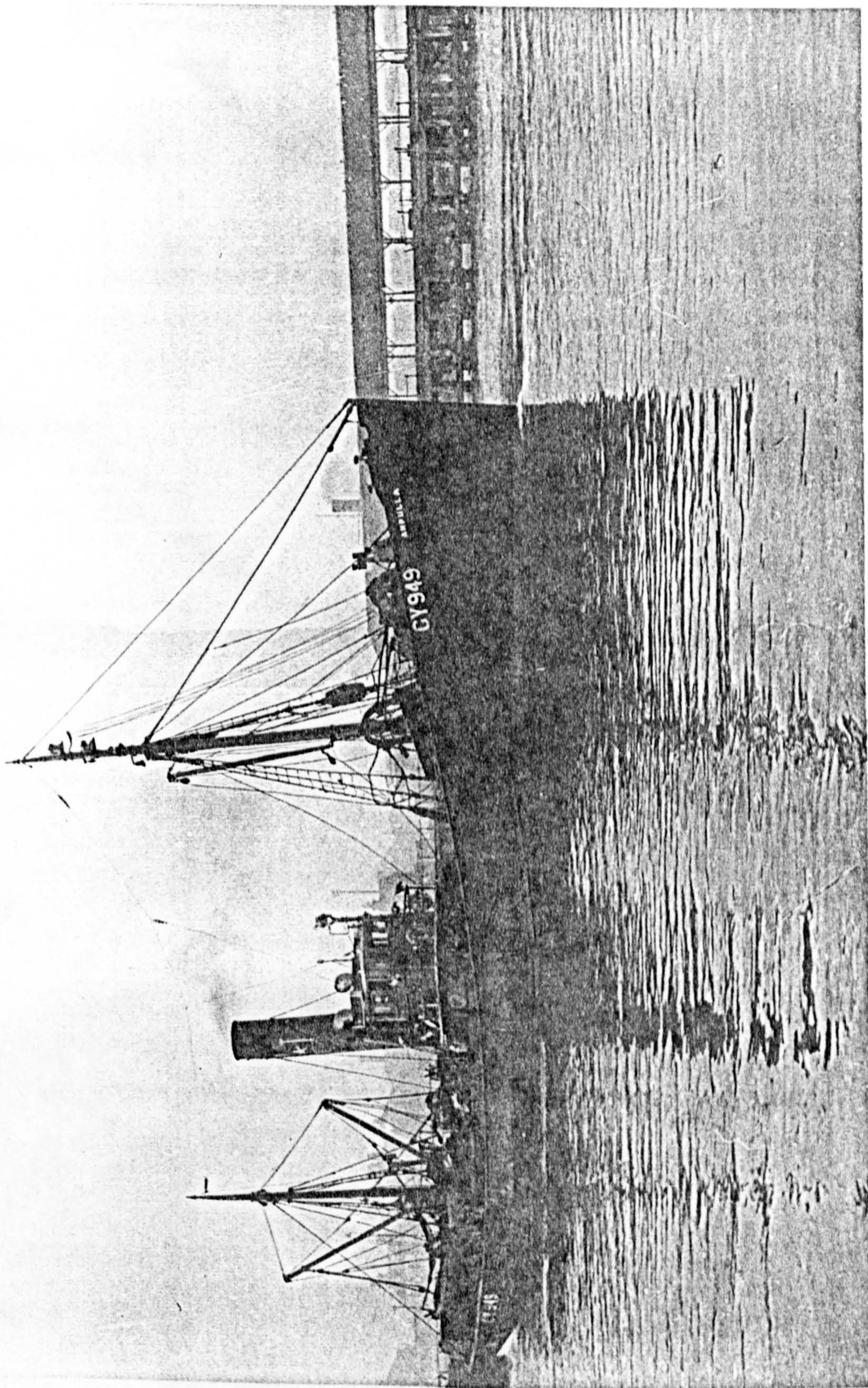


The photograph is of the Grimsby steam trawler, *Ariadne* , (GY.173) which was built in 1906 for a Grimsby trawler company.

Source: Fishing Archives, Grimsby Central Library, Grimsby.

PLATE 4

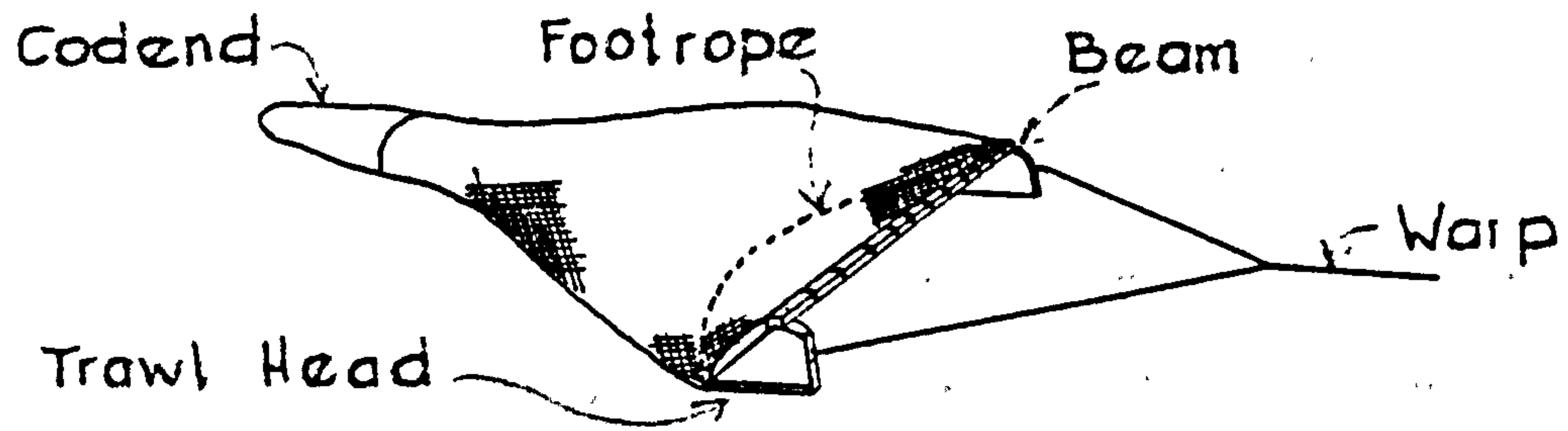
The Grimsby steam trawler *Ampulla* (GY.949)
tonnage 99 and HP 62. Built at Beverley in
1913 for the Loyal Steam Fishing Company Limited,
Grimsby.



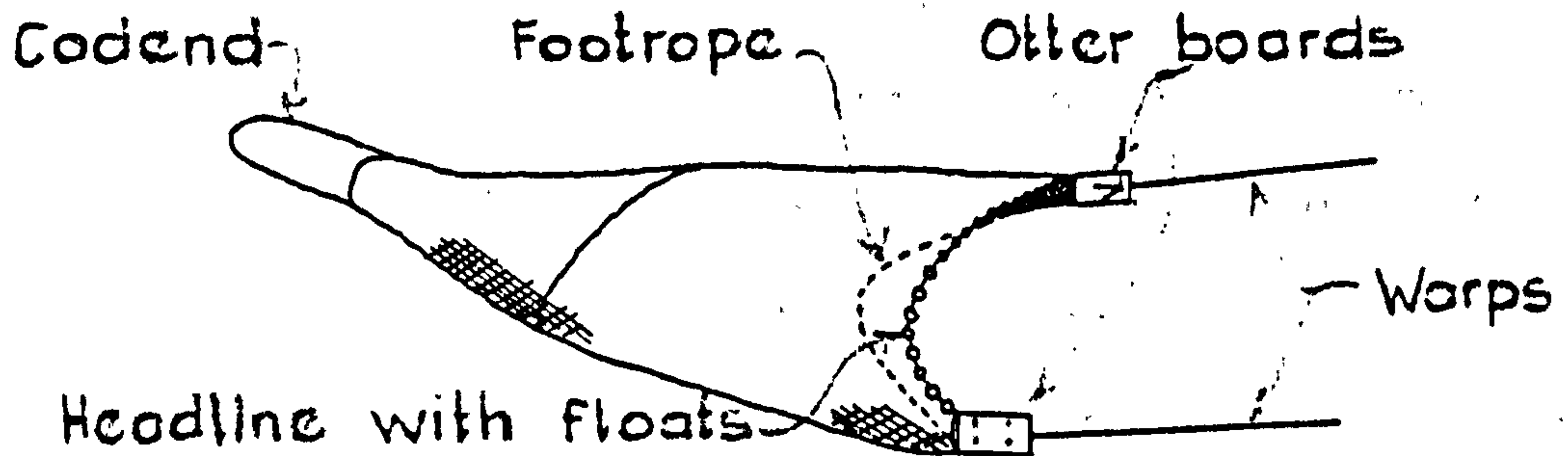
Source: Fishing Archives, Grimsby Central Library,
Grimsby.

FIGURE 4

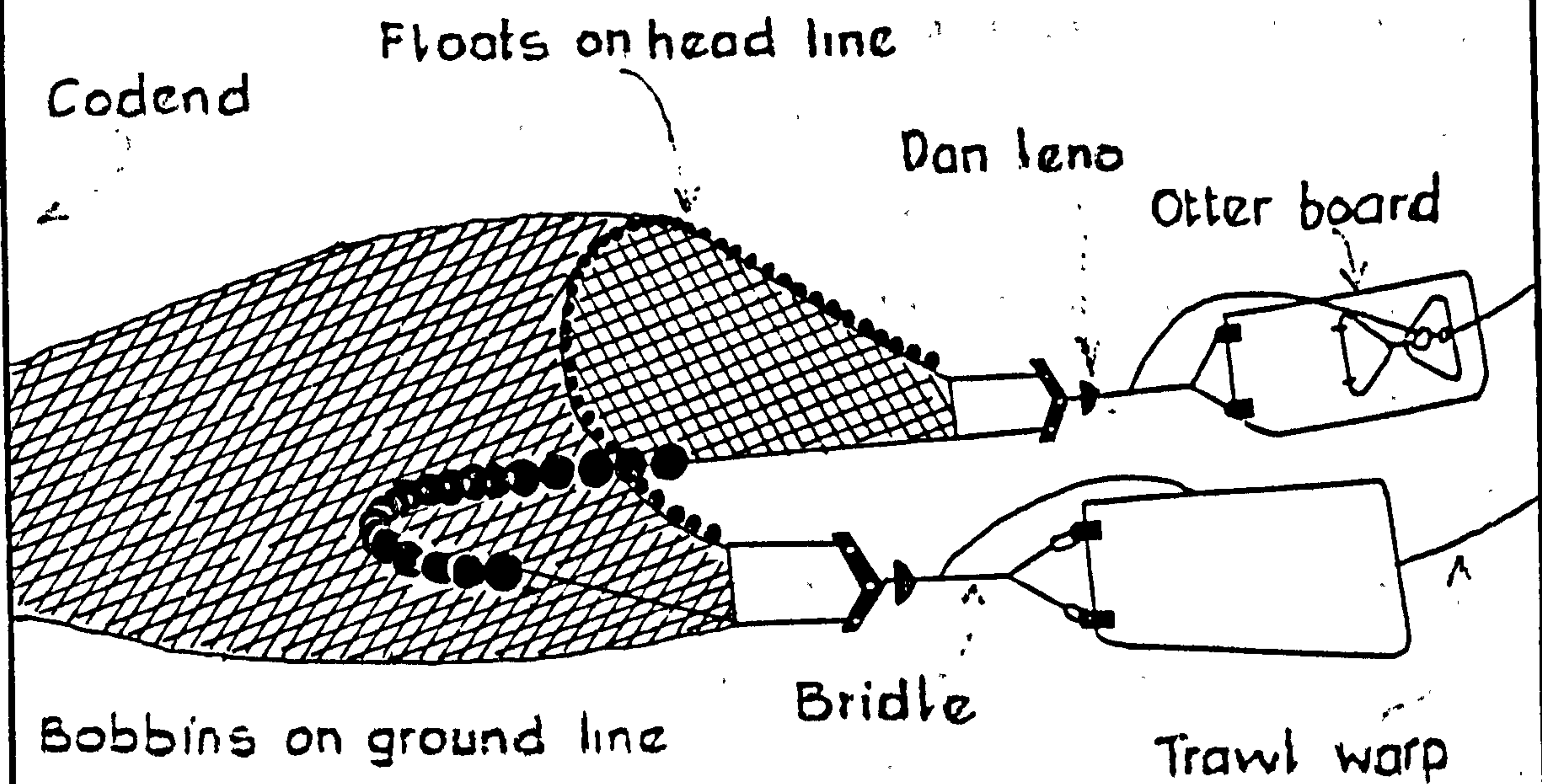
Changes in Fishing Gear Technology



BEAM TRAWL 1870



OTTER TRAWL 1890



OTTER TRAWL TODAY

technological developments in the design of steam trawlers were introduced and increasingly larger vessels were commissioned. One Grimsby trawler of some 160 feet in length, built in 1913, was described by a trade newspaper as the largest trawler in the world.¹²⁷ Changes were made in the Hull form of vessels, along with improvements in the design and power of the engines; electric lighting was introduced and there were other advancements made with steam powered winches, refinements in the design of propellers and wheelhouses.¹²⁸ The steam power meant, for example, that heavier trawl warps could be used to tow larger and heavier fishing gear, which meant, in turn, that the trawlers were able to fish in deeper water and on rough areas of the sea bed.¹²⁹ The designers, and those who commissioned these vessels, did not apparently pay much attention to the needs, safety and comfort of those who crewed the vessels.¹³⁰

Technological change almost always has economic, political and social implications for those affected by it and, in this respect, the British fishing industry was no exception. The particular forms of technological innovation and change outlined in this chapter disrupted the relationship between smack owners and fishermen in the English ports, particularly in the two largest: Hull and Grimsby.¹³¹ This change in technology brought about the demise of the fleets of English sailing trawlers and, in many instances, the bankruptcy of the smack owners.¹³² Both smack owners and fishermen were hostile to the

introduction of the steam trawler fleets and they demanded on a number of occasions that Parliament should prohibit their construction.¹³³ The investment of capital into the construction and ownership of these vessels and into ancillary organisations fostered the growth of regionally based working class communities.¹³⁴ In Aberdeen the growth of employment was unprecedented, as Gray observed:

"Such growth was unprecedented in the history of Scottish fishing communities, not only because of its rate and eventual scale but also because of the nature of the process. Fishing populations in the past had always grown organically out of established communities or by a very slow immigration of people.....But in Aberdeen there were no such organic connections with the past, and even when people of old fishing tradition enrolled with the new fleet they had to suffer a complete break with old relationships and ways of working."¹³⁵

It is the emergence of the capitalist organisation of the catching sector of the industry, in the form of limited liability companies, its implication for the fishermen and ancillary workers, and the emergence of trade unionism amongst the fishermen in the ports of Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull which will be the focus of attention in the following two chapters.

REFERENCES

1. It is not the author's intention to offer a comprehensive introduction to the history of the British fisheries, fishing communities and the fishing industry. A number of historical works, however, have been consulted and they are to be found, when not annotated in the text, in the bibliography.
2. See the *First Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, 1882*, Table V, pp.28-33. An Act of Parliament dissolved the Board of British White Herring Fishery on 16th October, 1882, and, in its place, created a fishery board with the title 'The Fishery Board for Scotland'.
3. M. Gray, *op.cit.* p.68.
4. *ibid.* See also Godfrey and Godman, *op.cit.*
5. *First Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, Edinburgh, 1883*, p.xv.
6. One Act of Parliament dealing with the fisheries and passed in 1883:

 ".....established, in fact, a kind of Convention between the nations bordering the North Sea for the more effectual policing of the high seas outside the three mile limit, the formulation of recognised regulations for lettering and numbering all fishing vessels, the protection of drifters and hookers (great liners and/or long lines) against trawlers (the increase in the numbers of which was apparently viewed with apprehension), and sundry other matters of common import. The most important Act of all, however, in its bearing on existing law is that commonly known as 'The Sea Fisheries Regulation Act, 1888', the outcome of which was the creation of sea fisheries districts for the local control of sea-fishery matters."
- F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.* p.216.
7. *op.cit.* p.xvi.

8. S.B. Saul, *'The Myth of the Great Depression 1873-1896'*, Macmillan, London, 1969, p.14. See also R.A. Church, *The Great Victorian Boom, 1850-1873*, Macmillan, London, 1975, pp.22-25.
9. See. B.R. Mitchell and P. Deane, *'Abstract of British Historical Statistics'*, 17, Cambridge University Press, 1971, Table 4, p.13.
10. 'Smack' is usually meant to mean an English ketch-rigged sailing vessel, of about 15 to 50 tons, used for fishing. See P. Kemp (ed.), *'The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea'*, Granada Publishing, London, 1979, p.810.
11. E. March, *op.cit.* p.40. Registered tonnage refers to a vessel's capacity rather than its weight. This system of measurement calculates the actual capacity of the vessel's hull underneath the upper deck in cubic feet and divides the total capacity by 100, the resulting figure being the gross tonnage of the vessel. However, this calculation does not take into account the space within the hull which is taken up by the crew's accommodation, stores and, in a mechanically propelled vessel, the engine-room, fuel bunkers etc. A second calculation is necessary involving the capacity, in cubic feet, of this space which whilst still equating 100 cubic feet with one ton, is deducted from the figure of the vessel's gross tonnage to provide a net tonnage. Both figures (gross and net) are known as register tonnages and are normally featured in a vessel's certificate of registration. See P. Kemp, *op.cit.* pp.875-876. A 'converter' smack was so called because at the end of September the foremast, topmast and crosstrees were removed and replaced with a polemast and boomless mainmast for herring-fishing (drifting).
12. D. Boswell, *'Sea Fishing Apprentices of Grimsby'*, Grimsby Public Libraries and Museum, Grimsby, 1973, p.11.
13. A capstan is a cylindrical barrel, with a vertically mounted spindle that was used for heavy lifting tasks on board sailing vessels. See E.J. March, *op.cit.* pp.94-95.
14. Some critics, when they discuss this hostility against the incursion of the steam on trawlers, assert, somewhat uncritically, that the cause of the resentment was due solely to the inherent 'traditionalism' or 'conservatism' of the sailing-smack owners and skippers. See E.J. March *ibid.* pp.41-45.
15. See Chapter 5.

16. As early as 1895, one observer, commenting on the animus surrounding the growth in the number of steam trawlers observed:

"The steam trawler, of course, has long been the piscatorial scapegoat, reviled by the inshore line-fisherman with an energy which is usually in inverse ratio to that with which he pursues his own calling and condemned with scant ceremony by the amateur 'naturalist' and the public at large."

E.W. Holt, '*An Examination of the Present State of the Grimsby Trawl Fishery*', published by the Marine Biological Association, Plymouth, 1895, p.5.

17. P. Kemp, *op.cit.* pp. 786-788.
18. R. Craig, '*The Ship: Steam Tramps and Cargo Liners: 1850-1950*', HMSO, London, 1980, p.5.
19. W.F. MacArthur, '*History of Port Glasgow*', Glasgow, 1932. Jackson, Wylie & Co., pp.105-133.
20. R. Craig, *op.cit.* pp.5-6.
21. *ibid.* p.7.
22. *ibid.* p.9.
23. P. Kemp, *op.cit.* pp.351-352. Incidentally, this vessel is now being restored to its original condition in the dock in which it was built some 140 years ago.
24. R. Craig, *op.cit.* pp.11-12.
25. *ibid.* pp.13-16.
26. The triple expansion engine was an important development of the marine reciprocating engine in that it added a third cylinder to the two-cylinder compound engine. The additional cylinder was inserted between the high and low pressure cylinders of the compound engine in order to employ the available steam three times instead

of twice as hitherto. First of all, the steam was fed to a high pressure cylinder, with the exhaust steam from that cylinder being fed into an intermediate pressure cylinder, and from there into a low pressure cylinder before being converted by way of a condenser, back into boiler feed water. Power was supplied to the drive of three pistons which were connected to the same crankshaft to increase the power carried to the propeller shaft. This design development was brought about by the improvements in the designs of high-steam pressure boilers. Kemp., *op.cit.* p.889.

27. R. Craig, *op.cit.* p.13.
28. The superiority over the ships of other nations diminished quite quickly in the last few years of the nineteenth century.
29. *ibid.* p.14.
30. A tramp-ship (or tramp) is a cargo-ship which does not follow a regular route between specific ports of call but, instead, may carry cargo to any destination and may be sent, even diverted, to any port where there is cargo to be loaded.
31. This is a measurement of the number of tons a vessel can carry in accordance with safety regulations.
32. *ibid.* p.14.
33. B. Greenhill, Director of the National Maritime Museum, in the Preface to R. Craig, *op.cit.* p.4.
34. Steam tugs were used to tow fishing smacks out of the harbours, at which point the latter reverted to wind-power, E. March, *op.cit.*
35. Changing patterns of ownership and control of fishing vessels is discussed more fully in Chapter 4.
36. *Grimsby News*, 23rd December, 1892.
37. F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.* pp.242-243.

38. *ibid.* p.24 Aflalo provides a table of the railway transport of fish (most of which was destined for Billingsgate Fish Market, London) from Grimsby for Easter week, 1903. (p.243).

Day	Waggon	Tons
Monday	284	827
Tuesday	260	763
Wednesday	372	1,153
Thursday	182	464
Friday	94	205
Saturday	93	207

39. *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Inspectors on Sea Fisheries (England and Wales) 1903*, London, 1904. Parliamentary Papers, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.
40. F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.* pp.30-81; E.J. March, *op.cit.* pp.17-26 and D. Boswell, *op.cit.* pp.8-12.
41. Long lining has not disappeared along with the sailing smacks. It is a technique, albeit of a highly automated kind, that is in use today by fishermen in some parts of the United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries. However, the automated long-lining vessel of today is utterly unlike the nineteenth century 'liner'.
42. A. von Brandt provides a detailed description of the different fishing methods and gear employed by those engaged in commercial fisheries and those in subsistence economies in his *'Fish Catching Methods of the World'*, Fishing News(Books) Ltd., London, Third Edition 1978.
43. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.9 and E.J. March, *op.cit.* pp.12-21. The welled cod smack had a long history in both Holland and England. There is mention of two being based in Yarmouth in the Privy Council Register of 3rd June 1668 and there is a model of one circa 1768, in the Science Museum at Kensington, London.
44. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.17.
45. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* pp.13-89.
46. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.84.

- 47..Fish that live on, or close to, the sea bed.
48. *Fishing News*, 22nd August 1980.
49. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* pp.21-22.
50. The largest fish market in London which is situated on the north bank of the River Thames immediately below London Bridge. The name Billingsgate dates from the late thirteenth century. In 1251, the Lord Mayor of London decreed that all fish, both salted and fresh, should be sold at Billingsgate. *Fishing News International*, January, 1982.
51. A.F. Aflalo, *op.cit.* 114-117.
52. E.J. March, *op.cit.* 114-126.
53. These large fleets came under the supervision of an "admiral" who was an experienced fisherman of many years standing. Each fleet had its own admiral and houseflag and the former's smack carried on its topmast two houseflags. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.54.
54. *Hull News*, October 6th 1883.
55. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.119.
56. See Chapter 2, pp.
57. J. Gaventa puts forward a similar case in terms of the reality of the social relationships between coal-mine employers and coal-miners in the Appalachian region of America. J. Gaventa, *op.cit.* pp.84-121.
58. *Hull News*, October 20th 1883.
59. Fish deteriorates very rapidly, except in extremely cold climates, so some means of preservation has to be employed to slow down the decay and bacterial spoilage.
60. A.F. Aflalo, *op.cit.* pp.98-99.

61. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.12. See also J. Rule, *op.cit.* p.53.

"In fact, the railways may be said to have contributed as much to the modern development of the fish trade as either steam trawling or the introduction of ice."

F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.* p.83.

62. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.179. Brigantines, barquentines and barques were types of sailing vessels and here again there is an example of business associations closely associated with both the fishing industry and the maritime transport industry commissioning such vessels in the late eighteen-seventies. Similarly, the Grimsby Ice Company, established in 1863 with capital of £700, bought several sailing ships to transport ice from the Scandinavian countries to Grimsby to supply the growing number of sailing smacks in the latter half of the century.

63. It should be pointed out that long before these two developments, i.e. the creation of railway networks in Britain and the use of ice as a preservative, small sailing fishing vessels had fished around the coast of Iceland. In 1532 upwards of 140 vessels sailed from London to fish off Iceland. See J. Nicolson, *op.cit.* pp.54-59.

64. E.J. March, *op.cit.* pp.186-192.

65. F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.* Chapter III.

66. See the *First Annual Report of the Inspectors on Sea Fisheries (England and Wales), 1886.*

67. *Hull News*, Saturday, October 25th, 1884.

68. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.12.

69. *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Inspectors on Sea Fisheries (England and Wales) for the Year 1899*, p.10. In 1882 the 'Short Blue' fleet of sailing smacks, owned by Samuel Hewett and Company, was made up of 82 vessels, ranging in size from 55 to 65 tons, which gave employment to some 570 males on the vessels and 107 ashore. See E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.157.

70. *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Inspectors on Sea Fisheries, (England and Wales) for the Year 1901, p.11.*
71. This was particularly the case for fishing harbours in the south-west of England at the turn of the century. See the annual reports of the sea fisheries inspectors for the years 1895 to 1905.
72. F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.* pp.93-94.
73. *ibid.* p.83.
74. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.12.
75. D.J. Owen, '*Ports of the United Kingdom*', Allman and Sons, London, 1948, pp.326-329.
76. ".....the number of boats engaged in the herring fishing was increasing, until in 1862 1,122 boats fished out of Wick during the six weeks season, and no less than twelve curing stations on the coast of Caithness dealt with the catches."

E.J. March, '*Sailing Drifters*', David and Charles, Newton Abbot, 1969, p.241. First published in 1952 by Percival Marshall and Company, London.
77. *Twenty-second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1903, Edinburgh, 1904, p.iii.*
78. A 'fifie' was a sailing vessel which was popular amongst fishermen on the east coast of Scotland in the nineteenth century, predating the 'Zulu' which was a fishing vessel which originated in north-east Scotland during the so-called Zulu war in South Africa (1878-79). J. Dyson, *op.cit.* p.176.
79. *Twenty-second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1903, p.v.*
80. *ibid.* pp.iii-vi.
81. *Twelfth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1893, p.viii.* Leith was the fishery district but Granton was the port in question.

82. The value of white fish landings increased year by year, viz. 1885, £55,000; 1886, £74,000; 1887, £95,000; 1888, £112,000 and 1889, £132,000. *Fish Trades Gazette*, March 8th, 1890.

83. The other major Scottish steam trawler port of Granton was being established at the time. A report on the growth of this port appeared in the *Fish Trades Gazette* of April 26th, 1890:

"The great increase in the quantity of fish offered has been met by a steady expansion of the system of distribution. The united catch of about six steam trawlers is sent every morning from Granton to Glasgow in time for the early market there, and the number of fish dealers, itinerant and otherwise, throughout the country has in recent years been greatly multiplied. Prices to the consumer have not changed in any appreciable degree, but the contest between the trawlers and the line boats in the matter of landing fish at the market at remunerative prices has been, in respect of labour, outlay and time, a very unequal one; and, as in all other domains of trade competition, the weaker have gone to the wall."

84. *Thirty-second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the year 1913*, pp.195-196.

85. *ibid.* Appendix C, No.II

86. M. Gray, *op.cit.* pp.166-174.

87. *Report of the Royal Commission on Trawl Net and Beam Trawl Fishing, 1884-5*, XVI, QQ 152; 1916, 1726, 1738, 1839, 2175. See also the *Report of the Select Committee on Sea Fisheries, 1893-4*, X5, Q 6450. National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Royal Commission on Trawling, 1884-5, QQ 1997-2001.

Select Committee on Sea-Fisheries, 1893-4, Q 6490. National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.

88. *Fish Trades Gazette*, May 25th, 1889. Whilst the Lord Provost might be said to have exaggerated, the prediction of the Treasurer soon proved to be precisely accurate. 'Ansel' is a gift of fish.

89. *Fish Trades Gazette*, May 3rd, 1890.
90. *Daily Free Press*, 4th January, 1899.
91. M. Gray, *op.cit.* pp.172-174.
92. *Daily Free Press*, 4th January, 1899.
93. *Twenty-second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1903*, p.xi iii.
94. *Thirty-second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1913*, p.xv
95. *ibid.* p.196
96. Other sections of the catching sector were also directly affected by the changes in technology:

"For some years the adoption of steam as a motive power in the propulsion of fishing vessels (other than beam or otter trawlers) was limited to the case of vessels employed in long-line fishing for white fish, but in 1899 the attention of fishermen and capitalists was drawn to the advantages derived from the application of the principle to drift-net fishing for herrings with the result that since that date there has been added to the steam fishing fleet.....a considerable number of vessels furnished with an equipment of drift-nets and long-lines, or of drift-nets alone."

ibid. pp.xiii-xiv.

97. E.J. March, '*Sailing Trawlers*', pp.42-43.
98. *ibid.* p.161.
99. *ibid.* p.45
100. *ibid.* p.45
101. J. Rule, *op.cit.* pp.59-60.
102. *Hull News*, May 29th, 1886.

103. *Fish Trades Gazette*, May 25th, 1889.
104. E.J. March, *op.cit.* pp.41.42.
105. E. Holdsworth, '*Deep Sea Fishing and Fishing Boats*', Edward Stanford, London, 1874.
106. *ibid.* p.48. The term 'otter-trawl' and more particularly the term 'otter board' are derived from the otter board used by salmon fishermen to tighten their lines or nets as they towed them along the shore. In trawl fishing, the term 'doors' is used rather than otter board. These doors - or otter boards - are attached to the sides of the nets and the trawl warps (wires) and they act as hydroplanes to force the sides outwards. The mouth of the net is kept open by this action in conjunction with weights at the bottom and floats at the top of the net. See Fig.2, p.
107. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.42-43.
108. *Fish Trade Gazette*, 19th March, 1921.
109. *Hull News*, 28th September, 1881.
110. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.43.
111. *First Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, 1882*, pp.xxxix-xi.
112. *Daily Free Press*, September 20th, 1883.
113. P. Myers, '*Aberdeen Steam Trawlers*', *Ships Monthly*, July 1980, London, pp.12-15.
114. *Daily Free Press*, 24th March, 1883.
115. M. Gray, *op.cit.* p.167.
116. *Hull News*, October 20th, 1883.
117. C.L. Cutting, '*Fish Saving*', Leonard Hill, London, 1955, p.249.
118. See Footnote 71, Chapter 2, p.104 .

119. *Fish Trades Gazette*, May 3rd, 1890.
120. M. Gray, *op.cit.* p.173.
121. P. Myers, *op.cit.* p.12.
122. *ibid.* p.13. There is today a small number of these 'scratchers' operating out of Aberdeen. Often they fish within thirty or forty miles of Aberdeen.
123. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.41.
124. M. Gray, *op.cit.* p.174.
125. *ibid.* p.175.
126. *Grimsby News*, 23rd December, 1892.
127. *Fishing News*, 6th September, 1913.
128. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* pp.18-20.
129. J. Nicolson, *op.cit.* p.74.
130. P. Myers, *op.cit.* pp.14-15.
131. The social relationships between the crews of sailing vessels and the vessel-owners were not invariably harmonious or co-operative, as will be discussed in Chapter 5.
132. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.17. Sailing trawlers were few in number in Scotland, where before the emergence of the steam liners and steam drifters, the overwhelming majority of sailing vessels were engaged in lining, driftnet fishing or both.
133. *Hull News*, October 9th, 1886.
134. M. Gray, *op.cit.* pp.174-175.
135. *ibid.* p.175.

CHAPTER 4

OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF THE STEAM TRAWLER COMPANIES

C H A P T E R 4

OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF THE
STEAM TRAWLER COMPANIES

The growth in the numbers of steam trawlers in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century brought about a major restructuring of the catching sector of the fishing industry in a number of localities, in terms of forms of ownership and control of fishing vessels, a growing concentration of limited liability trawler companies, and the sharp demise of the small sailing trawler companies and skipper-owners of single sailing vessels.¹ In addition, at this time the industry experienced the emergence of trade unionism, which already had a foothold amongst fishermen and groups of skilled workers in ancillary industries.²

In the first few years of the twentieth century, the steam trawlers were exploiting the fishing grounds around the Shetlands, Faroe, Iceland,³ and Greenland where there were large stocks of cod, haddock, sole, plaice and halibut.⁴ Their activities, in some of these areas and elsewhere, aroused controversy and social conflict and, as with other forms of technological change, the technological shift, from sail to steam generated a groundswell of hostility and resentment amongst numerous groups of people whose economic and social interests were directly affected as a consequence.⁵ Opposition to the adoption of the steam trawlers was to prove fruitless since the advantages they brought strengthened the power of their operators and, at the same time, further weakened the position of those in opposition.

Some traditional fishing-vessel owners in England appeared to be grateful for the uneven geographical distribution of the steam trawler fleets, even if this apparent isolation from the economic effects of steam trawlers was the result of their close proximity to sparse fishing grounds, or ones that were close to exhaustion and inadequate harbour facilities. These factors in combination, particularly where the southern North Sea, the English Channel and southern English ports were concerned, explain why there were so few steam trawlers based in the south of England.⁶ F.G. Aflalo makes this observation in the following passage:

"At Ramsgate, then, the sailing trawler persists, and the steam trawler stays away. Ramsgate owners congratulate themselves indeed on the fact that their harbour and the neighbouring sea are alike too narrow to attract the steamers of Hull and Grimsby, for which they have very little affection. The smaller craft of thirty or forty tons, which would be considered ridiculous at the more busy centres of the industry, are good enough for Ramsgate and the interest taken in steam by its fishermen does not go beyond its use in hauling the heavy trawl net."⁷

It was not only the English smack-owners who voiced their hostility towards what was perceived as the predatory activities of the steam trawlers. E.W. Holt was told by a number of fish buyers in Grimsby that large numbers of immature fish were destroyed by steam trawling and that, as a result, the fish supply, particularly of flat fish, e.g. sole and plaice, had suffered drastic diminution in the closing years of the nineteenth century and this depletion would prove to be irreversible.⁸ In Scotland at that

time, numerous complaints were made concerning the activities of English steam trawlers on the fishing grounds of the Moray Firth, which contained abundant stocks of cod and haddock.⁹

These stocks gave essential economic sustenance to a large number of small villages and towns in the fishing districts of Banff, Buckie, Cromarty, Findhorn, Helmsdale, Lybster and Wick (all dependent on fish). If we take, as an example, the district of Findhorn, we find that in 1890 this included the communities of Lossiemouth, Hopeman, Burghead, Findhorn, Nairn, Campbelltown, Pethy and Inverness, and Chachnaharry, from which 1,237 fishermen formed the crews of 476 fishing boats, many of which were liners.¹⁰ Their livelihood was threatened by the activities of the English steam trawlers which not only trawled large numbers of immature fish and hence seriously impaired the reproductive rates of commercially important white fish stocks but frequently damaged the static fishing gear of the line-fishermen.¹¹ It can be seen from Figure 2 page 124 and Figure 4 page 171 that the methods of lining and trawling do not lend themselves to working in close proximity. J. Nicolson makes the point:

"A trawl as it is towed along the bottom of the sea, scoops up everything in its path, including lines; and while such a confrontation is detrimental to the operations of the trawlermen, to the line fishermen it can be disastrous. The lines are towed and stretched until something gives, and all that the owner recovers are the ends."¹²

This social conflict between the operators of the English steam trawlers and the Scottish fishing communities of line fishermen was partially resolved by the enactment of

laws which, in effect, made the Moray Firth a prohibited area for British trawlers. Problems remained, however, for the line-fishermen since despite the penalties for infringement of the laws, English steam trawler companies and skippers continued to operate in the area, adopting various subterfuges to do so, e.g. fishing at night without lights, concealing registration numbers and vessel names.¹³ Moreover, given the then contemporary conventions of international law concerning narrow territorial limits,¹⁴ the British Government could not prohibit the trawlers of other nations from fishing in this area, albeit outwith the three miles territorial limits.¹⁵ Over a period of years a number of petitions were raised by line-fishermen and those sympathetic to their case and in 1909 an Act of Parliament was passed which forbade the landing at any British port of trawl-caught fish from the Moray Firth.¹⁶

At the same time that Scottish fishing communities were in disputation with the operators of English steam trawlers, many of the fishermen of the Shetland Islands were completely dependent on the local fisheries for economic support and followed that activity in quite small boats. At that time, approximately 4,400 Shetland fishermen manned some 900 vessels, almost 600 of which were 30 feet in length or more. These Shetland fishermen were in conflict with the operators and crews of both Scottish and English steam trawlers. This conflict which involved almost all districts in the Shetlands became popularly known as the 'haddock war' and the first prosecution in 1894 in a court of law of an

infringement of the three miles limit resulted in an English steam-trawler skipper being sent to gaol for fifty days.¹⁷

However, given the inadequate methods of surveillance and protection of these important fishing grounds, steam trawlers continued to operate in the prohibited areas for many years. In 1900 the Orkney and Shetland Vigilance Association was formed and a reward of five pounds was offered to anyone who could give information to the Fishery Board for Scotland which led directly to the conviction of a fisheries' miscreant in a court of law.¹⁸ In May, 1907, fourteen skippers of Aberdeen steam trawlers appeared in court at Lerwick, charged under the Herring Fishery (Scotland) Act, 1889, with illegal fishing within three miles of the low water mark off the coast of Fair Isle. All fourteen were convicted, on the basis of evidence given by local fishermen, and were fined from fifty to one hundred pounds with the alternative of forty days imprisonment. Two of the miscreants, J. Mulligan of the trawler *Hunter* and G. Rose, skipper of the *Swallow* paid fines of seventy-five pounds and one hundred pounds respectively, the other twelve skippers chose imprisonment.¹⁹

Such penalties reflect the concern of the authorities for the economic consequence, to the islands, of the conflict between the Shetland fishermen and the owners of the Scottish and English steam vessels. The activities of the latter had a crucial bearing on the livelihood of what were quite small fishing communities. J. Nicolson, a Shetlander, described

some aspects of the conflict in the following passage:

"Telescopes were issued to leading fishermen in each district but poaching trawlermen merely took the precaution of covering the name and number of their vessel with sacking, wood or even paint. Soon the inshore grounds were swept clean, and the catches of the line fishermen dwindled, while many a crofter-fisherman having lost the more important of his two²⁰ sources of income was forced to emigrate".

If we turn to the Humber ports of Hull and Grimsby in the late nineteenth century, we can see from contemporary accounts the hostile reaction to the adoption of the steam trawlers. Many sailing-smack owners, skippers and, what were then termed, senior fishermen frequently voiced their objections to these technologically new fishing vessels. Two reports published in a Hull newspaper within a period of two weeks in 1886 comment on the creation of a steam trawler company and the resentment that this kind of development aroused amongst smack-owners and skippers:

"The Boston Deep-Sea Fishery Co. was launched about a year ago. The company purchased off Mr. A.W. Ansell, who was then a fish merchant and smack owner, his seven sailing smacks and he was engaged as managing director. For some time the business of the company was conducted from Hull and while there Mr. Ansell was paid an agreed £1 per week per smack - £7 per week. The agreement specified that he should be paid £300 in consideration of his removal from Hull to Boston (Lincolnshire), and a salary of £800 per year as manager, together with five per cent commission on all order sales; his engagement as manager to continue for five years. Four steam trawlers were ordered by the newly-formed company and these were subsequently supplemented by four smaller boats of a similar class. After making a few voyages from Hull, the steam trawlers were brought to Boston, and

the business of the company established here in April of the present year. Mr. Ansell has £3,000 of shares in the company."²¹

The second article reported a meeting of smack owners, skippers and senior fishermen, which was held to discuss the question of steam trawlers. One participant, a smack-skipper, said that :

".....(he) believed the question before them would soon resolve itself into one of steam trawlers versus sailing smacks as to which should continue to exist and (his) opinion was that if the former remained and increased it meant ruin for the latter. At a recent meeting in Hull it was unanimously agreed that steam-trawling was detrimental to the interests both of the fisherman and the smack owners." Another skipper argued that, ".....they were all of the opinion that steam-trawling, apart altogether from the question of capital and labour, and the concomitant matters that came in its train, must ultimately ruin the North Sea Fisheries. By the laws of nature and the disposition of the elements, they who had been fishermen all of their lives knew that there was imposed upon sailing trawlers a close time of at least four months in the year when it was impossible for them to engage in fishing operations." Mr. Ashford proceeded to show how these natural laws were disregarded by the steam trawlers, which fished night and day, Sunday and weekday, and threatened to exterminate all the fish. One smack-owner contended that steam trawling would soon cease because of the expenses involved. The following resolution was moved and carried: "That this meeting of smack-owners and fishermen of the port of Grimsby, after fully discussing the question of steam trawling, demands of the Government that steps be taken to bring about its compulsory prohibition."²²

Whilst meetings of this kind were to prove futile exercises, where the adoption of steam trawlers was concerned, they demonstrate the depth of concern felt by some smack-owners, and skippers, and this anxiety was with more than the need to conserve the stocks of fish in the northern

North Sea. The protests concerning this new "evil system"²³ of trawling were disregarded by the trawler companies even although the state, mainly through Acts of Parliament, sought some control over the activities of steam trawlers, particularly in Scottish inshore waters.²⁴

In the first few years of steam trawling, the directors of recently incorporated steam trawler companies were somewhat concerned about the hostility towards their business activities and the appeals to Parliament to ban their vessels. However, these fears gradually disappeared. At a dinner attended by the directors and principal shareholders of the North Sea Steam Trawling Company Limited, in May 1890, several after-dinner speakers referred to the hostility engendered by the activities of steam trawler companies. One director, an Alderman H. Smethurst, made this claim:

"As pioneers of steam fishing in Grimsby, this Company had supplied a want that was very much felt by the general public, and also by the fish-buyers of their port. If it was only for the influence they had upon the fish supply, and the fact that the fish had been presented in a more fresh condition than before, it was their duty to give the company their heartiest thanks. As regarded its success, he did not know that he could wish it a better wish than that it might always pay as good a dividend as it had paid up to the present, for no better sign of success need be desired than a ten per cent dividend."²⁵

Another director, an Alderman D. Mudd, referred to the opposition they had met when they introduced their steam trawlers to the port but they were now firmly established and were providing a return on investments highly satisfactory to both the directors and shareholders.²⁶ This director, in his speech, also mentioned that he and a fellow director

were directors of another steam trawler company.²⁷ One other director, a J. Alward, observed to his fellow guests that:

".....the people most likely to be benefited by the steam fishing enterprise were those who were its bitterest opponents, the crews which manned the vessels. There was quite a fear at one time that steam fishing would be forbidden by Act of Parliament, but all this had been overcome and, at the present time, some of those who had so strongly opposed them were now taking the most active part in steam fishing companies."²⁸

The newspaper report stated that this part of the director's speech was greeted with laughter and applause.²⁹

In the first years immediately following the establishment of the steam trawler companies, numerous sailing smack-owners experienced a decline in their fortunes and had either to sell off their vessels or declare themselves bankrupt.³⁰ In Grimsby in 1887 thirty smack-owners were declared bankrupt.³¹ Some of these sailing vessels were converted, in local shipyards, and were subsequently used in the coastal cargo trade; others were sold to Scandinavian fishermen, whilst some were broken up. D. Boswell gives an account of the decline in the value of these vessels and their owners' circumstances:

"One vessel clearly illustrates (the) dreadful drop in value. That vessel, the *Argo* (*sic*), cost £1,600 when new in 1877. The following year, when sold on 9th March by order of the mortgagees, the smack passed into the hands of her new owner at the price of £1,190. Nineteen years later the *Argo* was again offered for sale by auction but on 15th June bids reached only £39 and the smack was withdrawn from sale."³²

During this period of acute and rapid structural change in the industry, there were those smack-owners who made the transition to ownership of steam trawlers.³³ In Hull, for

example, the Hellyer family which had migrated to the port from Brixham, Devon, in the eighteen-fifties and which owned, in the mid-eighteen-eighties, a large number of sailing smacks as well as a major shareholding in the Hull Ice Company, made the organisational change incumbent upon the technological change from sail to steam and by the end of 1905 the Hellyer firm owned fifty steam trawlers all of which were built within a period of nine years.³⁴ Similarly, in Grimsby a number of the larger sailing-trawler companies purchased steam trawlers and sold their smacks. In 1881 the Great Grimsby Steam Trawling Company Limited was formed with share capital of £50,000 with several former smack-owners as its directors. One of these directors made the following statement at the launching ceremony of their first steam trawler in 1881:

"The origin of the company was in consequenceof the success of steam trawling in other places, especially in the north of England. Himself and others of the directors had visited several ports where steam trawling was carried on, and seeing the fish delivered from the steam trawlers was superior in condition to the great bulk of the fish delivered at Grimsby, they felt that the trade and reputation of the port would suffer if they did not adopt the same method which would enable them to compete successfully."³⁵

The Grimsby Ice Company sold ninety smacks in 1896 to smack-owners further down the English coast, in Garlestone and Yarmouth, where most of the fishing was confined to the southern North Sea.³⁶ Whilst in 1889 there were 292 individuals who each owned a single smack in Grimsby, in 1901 there were sixty-nine steam trawler companies each of which possessed two or more vessels and only three steam

trawlers were owned by individual owners.³⁷ In this respect of rapid change, Grimsby was joined by Hull³⁸ and in terms of growth of concentration of ownership of modern steam fishing vessels, Aberdeen.³⁹

A similar process of technological, structural and organisational changes was taking place contemporaneously in the fishing towns and villages of northern and western France. According to C.L. Cutting:

"By 1900, the introduction of steam trawlers had led to the gradual disappearance (virtually completed by 1914) of the St Pierre fleet. The introduction of steam had made a *pied-à-terre* there and on Newfoundland superfluous. French steam trawlers appeared on the Banks in 1904 from Boulogne and Bordeaux etc., and the small fishing villages of Brittany began to decline."⁴⁰

Whilst it was possible for some sailing-smack skippers to acquire a sailing vessel, on the basis of a relatively small amount of capital and a large mortgage, and then 'work-out' the vessel, as it was known, until the loan was settled, it is doubtful if the acquisition of part-ownership or ownership of a smack was as widespread a phenomenon as suggested by, amongst others, E.J. March.⁴¹ He contended that not only was it entirely feasible for fishermen to become the part-owners of vessels but that with favourable circumstances they could become owners of fleets of vessels.⁴² W. Grenfell, writing in 1905, however, claimed that:

"Not one in a hundred of the men who were working out their ships ever got to own them.....as a rule when any man did get to own ship, it was too old to be of any value."⁴³

On the basis of an examination of the range of ownership of sailing smacks in Hull in the latter half of the nineteenth century, J. Rule contests March's view of the likelihood

of ownership :

"Of the 352 smacks in Hull in 1877, 93 were singly owned. On the maximum assumption that all these single owners were working skippers and on the basis of the usual crew of five, it can be estimated that 1,672 smacksmen out of 1,765 had no share in boat ownership. In fact the trawling industry was dominated by big fleets.⁴⁴

March may have both exaggerated the spread of ownership of smacks and deprecated the difficulties faced by those fishermen who aspired to ownership of a vessel, but Grenfell chose to ignore the longevity of many sailing smacks some of which were still fishing in the Scandinavian waters (owned by Scandinavians) in the nineteen-thirties.⁴⁵ Rule, who substantiates his argument by reference to the cost of new vessels fitted out for sea, ignores the fact that it was a common practice to buy at a second-hand price, a reliable, sea-worthy vessel.⁴⁶ March, for example, cites numerous cases of British sailing trawlers that were worked by a succession of owners for forty years or more.⁴⁷ Boswell gives an example of a smack that was built in 1837, being purchased in 1875 by a Grimsby skipper for the sum of £225. It required another £30 to fit the vessel out for sea.⁴⁸ It could be argued that in both Hull and Grimsby (perhaps more especially in the latter) there were skipper-owners of smacks and this would have been common knowledge amongst the crews of all vessels. In other words the former could be seen to be exemplars for those amongst the latter who sought to aspire to similar status.

For some fishermen, possession of their own sailing smack was not an entirely unrealisable aspiration.⁴⁹ However,

for the owners of a single smack and indeed for those who owned more than one vessel, the adoption of the steam trawlers and their profitable operations meant that in a short space of time, their vessels came to be seen as obsolescent equipment, their capital assets drained away and many were declared bankrupt.⁵⁰

In addition to the smack-owners who were ruined, numerous ancillary business firms experienced a drastic decline in their economic circumstances. For example, shipyards which were concerned exclusively with the construction of wooden sailing smacks and were too undercapitalised to invest in the organisational change to the building of iron-screw, steam ships; firms of sail-makers and rope-makers also suffered from the consequent decline in the demands for their products, and timber-merchants and their employees suffered as a result of this technological change and adaptation. Some firms were able to adapt to these changing circumstances and so continue but others and numerous workers, e.g. shipwrights, rope, sail and block-makers, were not so fortunate.⁵¹

Where ownership of steam trawlers in the two Humber ports was concerned, the ambitions of some skippers and fishermen were seen by almost all to be unrealisable. If ownership of a sailing smack was restricted, by cost, to a relatively small number of people then given that the cost of a new steam trawler was four or five times as high as a new smack, it was almost inevitable that the skipper-owners

and the owners of a single vessel would disappear from this section of the industry.⁵² That process of social mobility that enabled a crew member of a vessel to aspire to owning a vessel had always been very difficult but it was now impossible.

Ownership of the early steam trawlers was confined to landmen, a large proportion of whom, in Hull and Grimsby, were already established in vessel-ownership and ancillary activities. In the latter, M. Mudd, a former smack-owner and chairman of the Coal, Salt and Tanning Company was one of the founders of the North Sea Steam Trawling Company.⁵³ In the former, a fish merchant named Pickering had, over the years, acquired a fleet of twenty-one sailing smacks which were sold to buyers in Belgium, Germany, Holland and Portugal shortly after his company had taken delivery of four steam trawlers in the mid eighteen-eighties.⁵⁴ Most of the steam trawler company directors were involved in fish selling, fish-processing, fish curing, ownership of fishing vessels and the coastal shipping trade.

Much of the capital invested in the steam trawler companies in Hull and Grimsby came, then, from sources associated with the fishing industry and from people living in and around the city (see Table 8 page 200.) This localised source of investment can be seen in the following discussion of the early financial accounts and statements of a Grimsby steam trawler company. The Queen Steam Fishing Company of Grimsby, which

TABLE 8

List of Some Shareholders in the
Queen Steam Fishing Company circa 1908^a

Name	Occupation	Number of £10 Ordinary Shares	Value
Charles Absalom Osborne	Fish Merchant	300	£3,000
C. Alfred Osborne	Trawler Owner	284	2,840
Kate Elizabeth Osborne	(Spinster)	227	2,270
F.W. Humberstone	Fish Merchant	198	1,980
William Grant	Butcher & Ship Owner	96	960
H. Paddison	Fish Buyer	104	1,040
J. Burgess	Fish Salesman	34	340
J. Bannister	Fisherman	72	720
J. Cross	Builder	170	1,700
E. Fell	Joiner	102	1,200
J. Miller	Fishmonger	60	600
A. Paddison	(Spinster)	74	740
J. Paddison	Trawler Skipper	17	170
T.W. Lucksmith	Trawler Engineer	51	510
J. Tingley	Solicitor's Clerk	68	680
W. Coggan	Superintendent Engineer (employee of the firm)	17	170
D.H. Holland	Ship's Husband ^b	58	580

a This list is incomplete but it does give an indication of the local capital investment in the company. Most of the shareholders listed here and those with smaller investments lived in, or near to, Grimsby.

b A ship's husband in the fishing industry is a shore based crews' manager, usually responsible for the recruitment, selection, engagement and dismissal of crews.

Source: *Register of Members and Register of Transfers of Shares of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., Grimsby.*

TABLE 9

An Initial Financial Statement of a Newly-Formed
Steam Trawler Company

Statement showing the Original Cost, Depreciation and
Present Book Values of the Company's Properties,
31st December 1899.

Vessel	Registered Tonnage	Horse Power	Knots	Original Cost	Depreciation	Present Book Value
Windsor	62.10	50	10	£ 5,262.14s.11d.	£ 312. 2s. 4d.	£ 4,950.12s. 7d.
Balmoral	62.10	50	10	£ 5,267. 7s. 1d.	£ 297. 4s. 0d.	£ 4,970. 3s. 1d.
Buckingham	62.10	50	10	£ 5,263.16s. 4d.	£ 216.11s. 2d.	£ 5,047. 5s. 2d.
				£15,793.18s. 4d.	£ 825.17s. 6d.	£14.968. 0s.10d.

Source: Profit and Loss Account from the date of Incorporation (10th February, 1898)
to December 31st, 1899,
The Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., File 1, Archives, Grimsby Central
Public Library, Grimsby.

TABLE 10

Queen Steam Fishing Company Limited

Financial Statements and Auditors Report
for the year ended 31st December 1900

Average of Vessels Expenses, 31st December 1900

Average Expenses per Vessel

No. of Vessels	Total	Tons	Coal	Tons	Ice	Weekly Hands & Sharemen	Provisions	Trawls Warps etc.	Stores	Repairs	Dock Expenses
Year 1899 3 1/9	£2925.8.8	1025	£ 670.0.0	190	£131.2.8	£1011.11.11	£166.4.7	£357.3.6	£148.10.4	£146.-.2	£294.15.6
Year 1900 3 23/24	£3382.11.6	1137	£1019.9.0	174½	£120.3.3	£1034. 2.3.	£168.0.0	£474.9.0	£165.13.0	£134.14.0	£266. --.
Increase	£ 457.2.10		£ 349.9.0			£ 22.10.4	£ 1.15.5	£117.5.6	£ 17. 2.8		
Decrease					£10.19.5					£ 11.6.2	£ 28.14.6

Increases = £ 508.2.11
Decreases = 51.-. 1
£ 457.2.10

Source: The Queen Steam Fishing Company Limited File,
Grimsby Central Library, Grimsby.

produced its first annual report in 1900. This covered the period from its incorporation on 10th February 1898 to 31st December 1899.⁵⁵ The company's board of directors was composed of five men, comprising, the Chairman, S. Osborne, fishmerchant; W. Grant, J.P. wholesale-provisions merchant and butcher; H. Paddison, fish buyer; F.W. Humberstone, fish-merchant⁵⁶ and C.A. Osborne, fish merchant. In addition, another member of the Osborne family, C. Absalom Osborne, was the company secretary.⁵⁷ The directors were the principal shareholders and the rest of the capital was drawn from people who lived in or near Grimsby and most of whom had some business, employment or family connection with the fishing industry. (see Table 8, page 200)⁵⁸

In the period from the date of incorporation to 31st December 1899 the company made a profit of £3,220. 8s. 9d. on the operation of its three steam trawlers. The Financial Statement (Table 9, p. 201) shows the original costs of these vessels and their then current 'Book Values'. The sum of £825. 17s. 6d. was placed in a reserve fund for depreciation of assets and £42. 19s. 6d. was the sum employed writing off the formation expenses. A ten per cent dividend (income tax paid by the company) was paid to ordinary shareholders; this sum equalled £872. 3s. 8d. and there was then left a balance of £1,479. 8s. 1d for appropriation to the 'General Reserve' and directors' recommendation.⁵⁹ The Directors' Report, dated 7th February 1900 observed:

"The Company's three vessels have been well maintained and are working satisfactorily. The directors have ordered two new vessels, one of which they expect will be delivered by the end of February. The other boat is contracted for delivery in April next."⁶⁰

The Financial Statement (Table 9) shows that a steam trawler of some fifty registered tons cost in 1898 approximately £5,260, which was over five times the cost of a large sailing trawler. The price paid, by this company, for a new steam trawler can be contrasted with the price of a large sailing smack, built in 1886, for R. Hellyer, which was £990. 15s. 10d., (fitted out for sea).⁶¹

This difference in costs of the two vessels underlines the problems of the sailing-trawler owners attempting to take advantage of the technological change which had overtaken the industry. The fishing innovators were to be found amongst those who controlled the new steam trawler companies, which as business enterprises in the major fishing ports relied heavily on local capital investment and shareholders.⁶² See Table 8 page 200 for a List of some of the Company's Shareholders.

In Grimsby in the first few years of the twentieth century a small number of companies continued to expand their activities and this expansion took shape in the acquisition of further vessels. This development can be seen in the expansion of the Queen Steam Fishing Company. In the year ending 31st December 1900, profits were somewhat reduced when compared with those declared in the company's first annual statement, at £2,302. 2s. 3d.,

and a six per cent dividend (tax paid by the company) was declared in relation to ordinary shares. The Directors' Report observed:

"The Company's vessels have been well maintained and but for the enhanced price of coal and other commodities would have shewn (sic) a very satisfactory result for the year's working."⁶³

The changes to which the report refers can be seen in the statement (Table 10), p.202; there is a significant increase in the cost of coal but there is hardly any shift in the cost of crews' wages, ice, provisions, stores or repairs.

The financial accounts for that year also reveal evidence of the inter-connectedness of the trawler companies and ancillary industrial firms. At this date, for example, the Queen Steam Trawling Company owned shares in the following companies: The Great Grimsby Coal, Salt and Tanning Company Ltd.; The Great Grimsby Co-operative Ice Company Ltd.; and the Great Central Co-operative Engineering and Ship Repairing Company Ltd.⁶⁴ Already then there was an involvement with other firms and this was to be an enduring characteristic of these trawler companies.⁶⁵ The chief advantage obtained from investment in, and directorship of, ancillary industrial firms was that goods and services could be obtained, in some instances, at a lower cost and more rapidly than was the case for those trawler companies that were not so closely inter-related with other organisations.⁶⁶

Profits for the following year (year ending 31st December, 1901) were higher at £3,716. 8s. 5d.; the

directors authorised an ordinary share dividend of fourteen per cent, (tax being paid by the company) and share capital of some £28,000 was raised in the year, with a view to the purchase of more vessels. This favourable financial condition of affairs was to continue for a good number of years, so that between the years 1901 and 1913 the company was profitable enough to pay dividends to ordinary shareholders of not less than ten per cent; for example, in 1901, the dividend paid out was fourteen per cent and in the years 1903, 1905, 1906, 1911, 1912 and 1913 the dividend was fifteen per cent on ordinary shares.⁶⁷ Expansion took place in terms of ownership of vessels; by 1906 the company owned seven and by 1911 ten trawlers.

Aside from the company's investment in ancillary industrial firms, the Osborne family with another member, R. Osborne, owned a smaller steam trawler company named A. & R. Osborne (Steamers) Ltd., which in the first decade of the twentieth century owned three steam trawlers. This company also owned shares in the following companies: the Queen Steam Fishing Company; the Great Grimsby Coal, Salt and Tanning Company Ltd.; Great Central Co-operative Engineering Company Ltd.; the Great Grimsby Ice Company Ltd.; The Steam Trawlers Coal & Trade Company Ltd.; Wm. Grant Meat Supplies (the major shareholder in this company being a director of the Queen Steam Fishing Company); the Queen Street Factoring Company Ltd.; and Isaac Spencer & Company, Ltd.⁶⁸ The Osbornes also owned, with a B.C. Fisher, the Grimsby steam trawler *Leys*.⁶⁹ C. Alfred Osborne,

apart from his other directorships, was a director of the Vinur Steam Fishing Company Ltd. (the company had three directors) which owned two steam trawlers and he was also a director of the Hunstanton Oyster Fisheries Limited of Brightlingsea.⁷⁰

Compared with developments in other industries, these trawler companies were controlled by small capitalists but within the industry they were a powerful group, particularly those who had seats on the boards of several companies; the Osbornes, with their direct involvement in several trawler companies, the ice company, coal supply, ship repairing, engineering, fish processing and selling and provisioning firms, were part of the port's more powerful group of men. This welding of interests, in the ownership and control of trawler companies and other ancillary firms, has sometimes been overlooked by those observers who focussed their attention upon the distinctiveness of the catching sector of the industry.⁷¹

Similar developments in the ownership and control of the steam trawler companies took place contemporaneously in Aberdeen and Hull. In the former, for example, a substantial proportion of the fishing technology innovators were drawn from the ranks of businessmen who had major interests in the processing, curing, marketing and selling of fish.⁷² M. Gray observed:

"Some skippers obtained an owner's share as the price of their services and a very few eventually became the owners of the vessels on which they sailed; but in the main the trawling fleet was owned by landmen. The first efforts at fitting out trawlers were made by men of established

business positions, usually of a type that had some connection with fishing; the earliest examples in Aberdeen being Pyper, a (fish) merchant, and Walker, a fish-curer. The investment of the high profits of the first few years extended the interests of the innovators and by 1892 Pyper is found with interests in ten trawlers and Walker in seven."⁷³

The financial successes of some of the new trawler companies in Aberdeen led to the expansion of the company fleets. M. Gray comments thus:

"In the first period of the trawling industry in Aberdeen, comparatively few owners, making generally high profits, extended their individual fleets. But, even as the few firms grew, capital was continually being sucked in, often in small amounts, from other spheres.....Skippers might well participate as owners of boats within larger groupings. Nevertheless, the ramifications of the interests of the main owners - the first innovators and the salesmen seeking an outlet for their funds and a way of enlarging their businesses - did imply a substantial concentration of ownership in relatively few hands."⁷⁴

In the first decade or so of the twentieth century, the steam trawlers of Aberdeen were to be found in companies of varying size. Some of the vessels were owned singly, or in twos and threes, and in the spread of these small firms, some skippers became part-owners.⁷⁵ The most significant trend at this time, as Gray observed, and in common with Grimsby and Hull, was the growth of the limited liability companies which owned fleets of differing size.⁷⁶

There were, however, some differences between Aberdeen, Grimsby, and Hull, in terms of the movement of capital and ownership of the companies. For example, whilst much of the capital invested came, in the main, from people who lived in, or near to, Aberdeen, only a small proportion

of the investors appeared to have any lengthy preceding connections with the industry and of those who occupied a major ownership and controlling interest in the Aberdeen trawler companies, only approximately half had been directly involved in the fishing industry.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, there is substantial evidence, as Gray demonstrated, to show the inter-connectedness of directorships in steam trawling, ship-building, repairing and engineering, coal supply, ice-supply, and provisions firms. Gray observed:

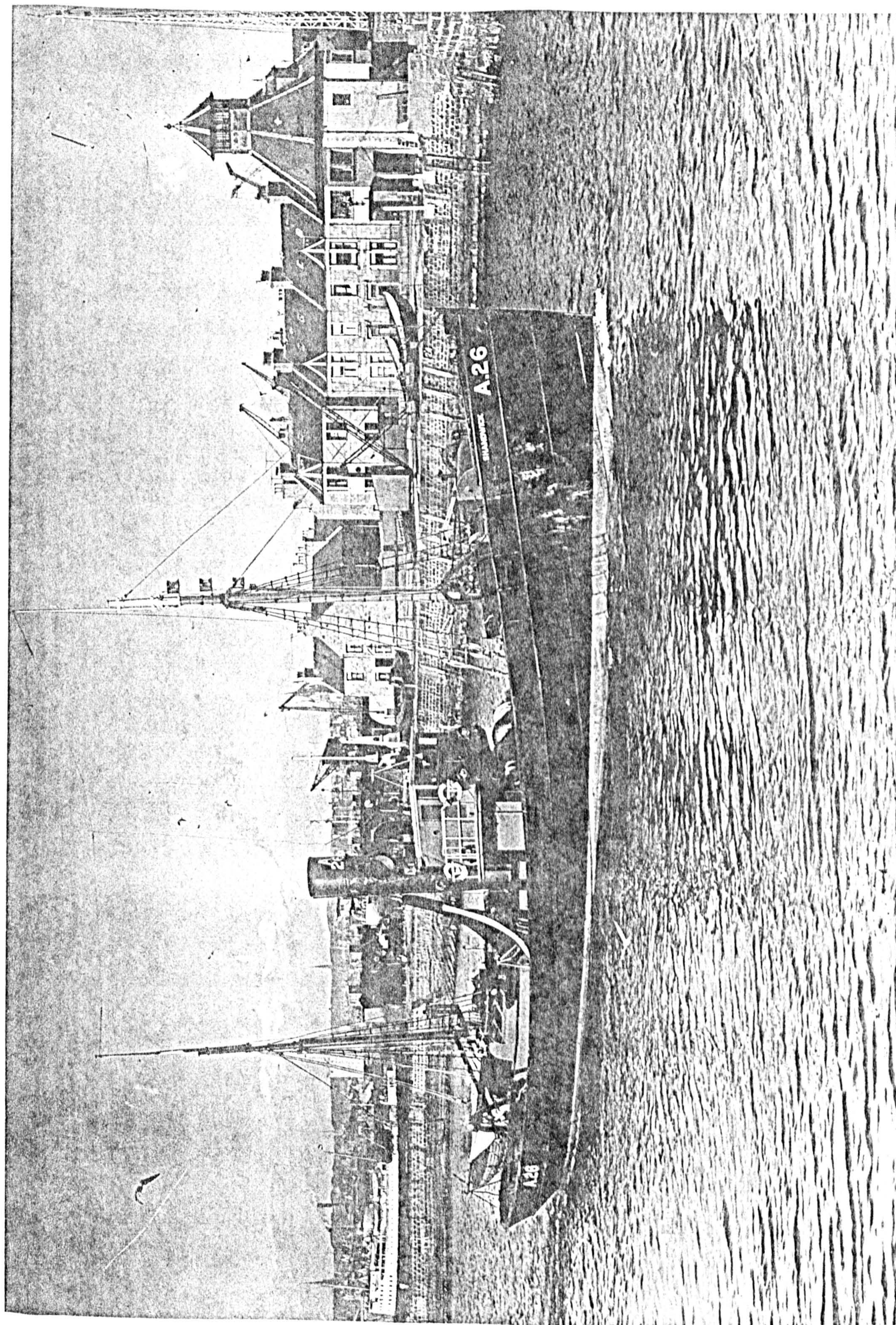
"The (trawler) companies assisted in, and made more public, the knitting together of the various interests in supplies, ship-building and repairing, and processing that clustered around fishing. Thus, by 1913, of the sixty-five men who were either individual owners or directors of fishing companies, thirty three can be traced as having direct interests in other aspects of the fishery business."⁷⁸

A typical example of this kind of fishing entrepreneur could have been J. Moir, manager and director of the Onward Steam Fishing Company (Aberdeen) Ltd., who, in 1910, was also a director of the North Eastern Ice Co. Ltd., Enterprise Ship Stores Ltd., East Coast Steam Fishing Company (Aberdeen), Ltd., and the National Steam Fishing Company (Aberdeen) Ltd.⁷⁹

An examination of some of the financial accounts of these early Scottish steam trawler companies reveal the important managerial role occupied by those major investors who were experienced in the industry, when compared with directors and shareholders who followed other professions and occupations. For example, the Clan Steam Trawling

PLATE 5

The Aberdeen steam trawler *Shandwick* (A.26) was built in 1912 for the Aberdeen trawler firm of Wood and Davidson, Ltd.; net tonnage 82; HP.130.



Source: Original Photograph is in the Local Archives Section of the Aberdeen City Library.

Company, Ltd., of Aberdeen, which was incorporated on 20th November, 1902, with capital of £16,000. had initially seven directors on its board, all of whom lived in Aberdeen; one was a doctor, one was a grocer, one a slate manufacturer, one an architect, one an owner of a packing-case and barrel manufacturer and two fish merchants.⁸⁰ A prospectus issued by the company shortly after its formation stated:

"Messrs. Alexander Baxter and Alexander Thomson (the two fish merchants), two of the Directors, have agreed to act as Joint-Managers of the Company. They are thoroughly conversant with the fishing industry and those engaged in Fishing, and the Directors have every confidence that they will be able to secure the services of the most capable skippers and fishermen, and to conduct the affairs of the Company in an economic manner."⁸¹

Similar characteristics of ownership and control were to be found in the Bon Accord Steam Fishing Company Ltd., of Aberdeen, which was formed on 22nd October, 1901, with capital of £12,000. Of the six directors, five of whom lived in Aberdeen, one, H.A. Holmes, was the managing director of the Loch Line Steam Fishing Company (Aberdeen) Ltd., one was a fish merchant, one a farmer, of Alford, one was a writer and the sixth was a granite merchant. The first two occupied managerial positions in the company and were the most influential members of the board of directors.⁸² This was the case, too, with the Caledonian Steam Trawling Company Ltd., of Aberdeen, which was incorporated on 1st June, 1899, with capital of £12,000. The six directors included a

Stonehaven bank manager, J. Duthie, the Aberdeen shipbuilder, two Aberdeen advocates, the then parish minister of Ellon (Church of Scotland), the Reverend T. Young, and an Aberdeen fish-curer named A. Smith.⁸³

Almost all of the steam trawler companies formed at this time had fish merchants or fish curers on their boards. One which differed in this respect, however, was the Wetherly's Steam Fishing Company, Ltd., of Aberdeen. Formed on 28th December, 1906, with capital of £10,000, its board of directors was made up of a retired Aberdeen merchant, a cattle salesman, a retired builder, two brothers, namely W.R. Wetherly and W.J. Wetherly, both of whom were Aberdeen steam trawler skippers, and a third Aberdeen trawler skipper, H.E. Stroud.⁸⁴ In 1912 this company owned four steam trawlers worth, after depreciation, £22,436. 8s. 4d. and in 1913 another member of the Wetherly family, R.E. Wetherly, who was also a trawler skipper, was elected to the board of directors.⁸⁵

Where the principal shareholders of a company were widely dispersed throughout mainland Britain, it was likely that the organisation would be dominated by locally-based directors with some knowledge of the industry. Such was the case with the North Sea Steam Trawler Company, Ltd., of Aberdeen, formed on 9th September, 1902, with capital of £20,000. Of its three directors, two lived in Aberdeen, one of these being a fish merchant and the other a consulting engineer; the third director, named W. Lyall Stewart, lived in Edinburgh

and was classified in the company's financial statements as a 'Gentleman'. Other major shareholders, a banker, a doctor and gentleman, lived in London. One other gentleman, a retired consul-general to Japan (Yokohama) who had an investment of £500, in the company, lived in Botley, Hampshire.⁸⁷ This company acquired two steam trawlers in 1903 one of which was built in Edinburgh and one in Kinghorn, Fife.⁸⁸

It would appear that there were many people, in all kinds of occupations and social classes, who were willing to invest capital of varying amounts, from five pounds to one thousand pounds or more, in these new capitalist ventures.⁸⁹ Many of the prospectuses issued, by the new steam trawler companies, in Aberdeen placed considerable emphasis on that port's close proximity to the fishing grounds, its importance as a fish market and its railway facilities; an added inducement, perhaps the most important for prospective shareholders, was the claim that large dividends had been paid by numerous companies.⁹⁰ An example of such a prospectus is one produced on behalf of the Bon Accord Steam Fishing Company Ltd., in February, 1901, from which the following quotation has been taken:

"Aberdeen has the special advantage of being in close proximity to the Fishing Banks, and is at the same time possessed of admirable railway facilities for the immediate despatch of fish to all the best and available markets. It is well known that many Fishing Companies have for years been carrying on large and lucrative business, and the Directors are of opinion (sic) that, with the excellent management they will be able to secure, the Company will be in a position to pay substantial dividends to the

Shareholders. The Directors have in view the advisability of acquiring steamers of the newest type together with the best and most modern appliances for carrying on the business. They also recognise the necessity of engaging reliable and competent men as Skippers and Fishermen, and their attention to these matters in the interests of the Company will be carefully directed."⁹¹

No mention is made in these prospectuses of the fact that in numerous instances "excellent management" was not always a feature of these companies and that they also suffered from under-capitalisation. This omission is understandable given that the object of such a prospectus was to persuade people to invest money in a company. Gray, however, amongst others, in his account of the emergence and development of the steam trawler companies in Aberdeen in the period 1880 to 1914,⁹² signally fails to correct this omission. He offers a detailed, descriptive chronicle of the technological, structural and organisational changes experienced by this sector of the industry but he does not discuss the failure of numerous Aberdeen companies to survive for more than a few years.⁹³ Gray's account leaves one with the somewhat erroneous impression that, alongside the demise of the sailing trawlers and their owners, there was a proliferation of successful steam trawler companies, ranging in size from companies owning a single vessel to those with ten or more vessels. The truth of the matter is rather different. Some steam trawler companies proved to be, in the last decade or so of the nineteenth century and first two decades of the twentieth century, successful,

profitable companies while others were most unsuccessful and were dissolved within a few years. See Table 11 page 216 List of Dissolved Trawler Companies.⁹⁴

Table 11 includes small Aberdeen firms, for example the Onward Steam Fishing Company, Ltd., which had two principal shareholders, one of whom was an Aberdeen steam trawler skipper and the other an Aberdeen spirit merchant, owned only a single vessel. Also featured in the list are much bigger companies, an example of which was the North Line Steam Fishing Company Ltd., also of Aberdeen, which operated ten steam trawlers. The five directors were all fish merchants and trawler owners, one of whom, W. Pyper, the managing director, was one of the fishing innovators, cited by Gray in his account, of the establishment of the trawler companies in Aberdeen.⁹⁵ Pyper was the major shareholder in the company in which he and his wife owned ordinary shares worth £2,240 at the end of 1901. A. Craig, another director, owned shares valued at £1,540 and R. Bowman (director) owned shares of £1,062. Out of ninety-nine shareholders, listed in late 1901, only twelve listed addresses outside the city. One of the shareholders, living in Aberdeen, was the then chief constable of the city, Thomas Wyness, who owned shares worth £291.⁹⁶ This company experienced mixed fortunes over the next few years; in November 1908 Pyper was removed from the board owing to ill health, and a *Curator Bonis* was appointed to take care of his affairs.⁹⁷ In 1909 his brother George Pyper, a metal merchant, was

TABLE 11

A List of Dissolved Steam Trawler
Companies in Scotland^a

Name of Company	Port	Date of Incorporation	Capital £	Date of Liquidation
The Aberdeen Steam Trawling and Fishing Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	24. 2.1890	15,000	20.10.1899
Anstruther Steam Fishing Company Ltd.	Anstruther	10. 7.1891	7,400	19. 4.1902
Castle Steam Fishing Company Ltd.	Anstruther	24. 1.1896	3,500	13. 3.1902
North British Steam Fishing Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	28. 1.1897	50,000	20. 4.1908
Camperdown Steam Trawling Company Ltd.	Dundee	25. 1.1899	40,000	13. 4.1902
Caledonian Steam Trawling Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	1. 6.1899	12,000	8. 3.1918
Bon Accord Steam Fishing Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	22. 2.1901	12,000	22. 5.1939
North Line Steam Fishing Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	19. 7.1901	30,000	22. 4.1914
Balgownie Steam Trawler Fishing Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	7. 2.1902	11,000	26. 6.1916
North Sea Steam Fishing Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	9. 9.1902	20,000	31.10.1911
Clan Steam Trawling Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	20.11.1902	16,000	9. 2.1911
Wetherly's Steam Fishing Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	28.12.1906	10,000	3. 3.1927
Onward Steam Fishing Company Ltd.	Aberdeen	18. 8.1910	3,000	12.12.1919

a This is not an exhaustive list but it will be seen that eight of these companies were dissolved in the period 1899-1914.

Source: Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh.

elected to the board in his place,⁹⁸ and in the same year A. Craig retired owing to ill health.⁹⁹ Early in 1914, three directors, R. Bowman, J. Gibson and G. Massie resigned and two weeks later (22nd April), at an extraordinary meeting of the shareholders, a resolution was passed concerning the appointment of a liquidator.¹⁰⁰

Some steam trawler companies were much more successful than others, as illustrated by the short existence of the North Line Steam Fishing Company Ltd. compared with the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd. of Grimsby. The latter made enough profit in the year 1914 to authorise a fifteen per cent ordinary shares dividend (tax paid by the company).¹⁰¹ The five directors, who had sat on the board since the incorporation of the company in 1898, rewarded themselves with emoluments totalling £1,295. 2s. 3d.¹⁰² In the following year, 1915, profits were higher at £4,303. 14s. 10½d., the ordinary share dividend was again fifteen per cent (tax paid by the company), and the directors authorised payments to themselves of £3,027. 6s. 4½d.¹⁰³

The enhanced profitability of the company was brought about by a number of factors, chief of which was the relative scarcity of fish which meant that what fish was caught brought a high price at the market.¹⁰⁴ See Table 12, page 219, Average Earnings of Vessels for the year 1911-1915. This scarcity was brought about both by the actions of enemy warships, resulting in a reduction in the numbers of vessels fishing through sinkings, and by

many others being chartered by the admiralty for mine-laying, mine-sweeping, and other services.

March observed:

"Events moved swiftly following the declaration of war as on the 7th August, 1914, the 227-ton steam trawler *Tubal Cain* was captured by the armed merchant cruiser *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, 50 miles W.N.W. of Iceland. Three weeks later the Boston (Lincolnshire) fleet lost 7 out of 8 in one day, the crews being taken prisoner. During the month 25 steam trawlers were sunk chiefly by cruisers and destroyers, and by the end of May, 1915, no less than 91 had been sunk or captured."¹⁰⁵

In 1915, the Queen Company lost two vessels, the *Balmoral*, on 22nd January, and the *Windsor* on 20th January, whilst seven others were engaged in mine-sweeping, under charter to the admiralty. Two vessels fished on every day of the year; the *Alexandra* made fifty-three voyages (trips), landed 1,407 tons of fish and the nine men crew collectively earned £3,171. 17s. 0d., whilst the *Buckingham* completed 49 trips and the crew's income was £2,899. 16. 6d.¹⁰⁶ (In the year ending 31st December, 1913, the crews of these two vessels earned £1,308. 2s. 9d. and £1,043. 4d. 9d. respectively for what was a shorter working year.)¹⁰⁷

Financial statements for the year 1916 are missing from the company's records in the Grimsby library but profits for the year ending 31st December, 1917, were £5,192 and again there was an ordinary share dividend of fifteen per cent (tax paid by the company). The five directors received collective remuneration of £3,177.¹⁰⁸ In the year ending 31st December, 1918, the company was more successful; there was a profit of £19,176, an interim

TABLE 12

Average Annual Earnings of Queen Steam Fishing
Company Ltd. Steam Trawlers for the Period 1911-1915

Year	Average Fishing Earnings per Vessel	Average Expenses per Vessel	Average Nett Result Per Vessel
1911	£ 4,226. 2s. 2d.	£ 3,378.17s.10d.	£ 847. 4s. 4d.
1912	£ 4,457.16s. 1d.	£ 3,558.11s.10d.	£ 899. 4s. 3d.
1913	£ 4,684.17s. 6d.	£ 3,874.17a. 9d.	£ 809.19s. 9d.
1914	£ 4,560.19s. 8d.	£ 3,825. 4s. 7d.	£ 735.15s. 1d.
1915	£10,704. 6s. 6d.	£ 5,729. 0s. 6d. ^a	£ 4,975. 6s. 0d.

a The cost of coal and provisions rose in this period and the crews received increased wages and shares in the sales of the catches, see page

Source: *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1915.*

dividend of ten per cent per ordinary share paid on 1st January, 1919, and a final ordinary share dividend of fifteen per cent (tax paid by the company), the directors' joint remuneration for the year being £11,162. 0s. 10d.¹⁰⁹

In 1918, of the company's ten vessels only two were engaged in fishing operations, the *Alexandra* and the *Buckingham* but they earned between them considerable profits for the company. Fishing earnings for the two vessels for the year amounted to £44,375. 3s. 9d., with expenses totalling £18,800. 15s. 11d., leaving a balance of £25,574. 7s. 0d.¹¹⁰ Those vessels in the service of the state and under charter to the admiralty provided the company with some financial return (see Table 13, p221 Charter Charges and Company Expenses). It will be seen, however, that these charter returns for eight vessels were much less than the profits earned by the two vessels that were catching fish, i.e. the eight vessels under charter earned for the company approximately one-third of the net earnings of the *Alexandra* and the *Buckingham*.

The company was more profitable in 1919 than it was in 1918 and on 1st January, 1920, an interim dividend of ten per cent was paid on ordinary shares and this was followed by a final dividend of twenty per cent on ordinary shares.¹¹¹ By this time most of the company's vessels were engaged in fishing even although some were retained by the admiralty, following the cessation of hostilities, to help complete the Royal Navy's mine-sweeping operations. The company continued its profitability and in 1922, with the same

TABLE 13

Charter Charges and Company Expenses
for the Year 1918

Vessel	Hire as per Charter Party	Company Expenses: Store-keeping and Superintendent Engineer's Remuneration. (Charged against Hire)
Kensington	£ 730. 0s. 0d.	£ 49.16s. 4d.
Queen	£ 730. 0s. 0d.	£ 49.16s. 4d.
Sandringham	£ 883.15s. 0d.	£ 49.16s. 5d.
Marlborough	£1,110.16s. 0d.	£ 49.16s. 5d.
Consort	£1,034. 9s. 0d.	£ 49.16s. 5d.
Holyrood	£1,408. 0s. 0d.	£ 49.16s. 6d.
Windsor ^a	£1,484.16s. 0d.	£ 49.16s. 6d.
Balmoral ^b	£1,457.14s. 0d.	£ 49.16s. 6d.
	£8,839.10s. 0d.	£398.11s. 5d.
Less five per cent commission on Charter Hire	£ 441.19s. 6d.	
Balance to the Company	£8,397.10s. 6d.	

a This vessel was delivered by the shipbuilders to
to company in December 1916.

b This vessel was delivered to the company in
January 1917.

Source: *Financial Statements of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd.,
for the year ending 31st December, 1918.*

individuals making up the board of directors, it owned ten steam trawlers, see Table 14, page 223, List of Steam Trawlers owned by the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd..¹¹²

From its first year of operation (1899) to 1922, this steam trawler company made profits each year and the ordinary shareholders received dividends of not less than ten per cent and in two of those years they received dividends of twenty per cent or more. Table 15 pages 224/5 Detailed Expenses Incurred by the Steam Trawlers owned by the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., gives an indication of the standing of the company in 1922, some twenty-four years after the date of incorporation. In addition, the financial statement and accounts for 1922 reveal that the company had investments totalling £8,130 in the following companies: The Great Grimsby Coal, Salt and Tanning Company Ltd., the Great Central Co-operative Engineering and Ship Repairing Company Ltd., the Grimsby Cordage Company Ltd., the Grimsby Steam Trawlers Coal and Trading Company Ltd., the Grimsby Ice Company Ltd., Isaac Spencer and Company (Grimsby) Ltd., Henry Blanchard Ltd., and Cadbury Brothers Ltd..¹¹³

In contrast, then, to the North Line Steam Fishing Company Ltd., of Aberdeen and other short-lived steam trawler companies, the Queen Steam Fishing Company appeared in 1922 to be a successful company. However, the table on page 223 shows that of the company's ten trawlers, five were fifteen years old and two twenty years old. There

TABLE 14

List of Steam Trawlers Owned by the
Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., at 31st December, 1922.

Date of Register ^a	Vessel	Knots	Date of Sailing ^b	Registered Tonnage	Nominal HP	Original Cost
9. 3. 1899	Buckingham	10	18. 3. 1899	70.50	50	£5,263.16s. 4d.
5, 5, 1900	Kensington	10½	9. 5. 1900	66.74	57	£6,128.15s.10d.
14. 9. 1900	Queen	9½	7. 9. 1900	61.50	50	£5,860.19s. 4d.
20. 6. 1905	Sandringham	9½	26. 6. 1905	68.61	55	£5,723.15s.11d.
14.10.1907	Marlborough	10	21.10.1907	101.51	66	£6,794.19s. 1d.
11.11.1909	Consort	10	13.12.1909	80.14	60	£5,481.19s. 5d.
7. 6. 1914	Holyrood	10	23. 6. 1914	92.02	62	£7,043.12s. 8d.
14.12.1916	Windsor	10	13.12.1916	96.58	66	£7,877. 8s. 7d.
19. 1. 1917	Balmoral	10	24. 1. 1917	96.58	66	£7,992. 8s. 7d.
15. 2. 1922	William Briggs	10	15. 2. 1922	79.87	74	£7,539. 2s. 3d.

a Date of registration with the Board of Trade and Lloyds Register.

b Date at which vessel is fully commissioned and fitted out for first fishing voyage.

Source: Detailed Financial Statements and Reports for the Year Ending 31st December, 1922,
for the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., Grimsby Public Library.

TABLE 15

Details of the Expenses Incurred by the Steam Trawlers owned by the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the Year Ending 31st December, 1922.

Vessel	Trips	Days at Sea	Average Daily Consumption of Coal Tons	Coal		Ice		Provisions
				Tons	Cost	Tons	Cost	
Buckingham ^b	34	244	4.5	1,093.5	£ 1,580. 0s. 9d.	197.5	£ 147.18s. 4d.	£ 350. 6s. 1d.
Kensington ^b	37	285	5.5	1,567.5	£ 2,271.13s.11d.	233.0	£ 173. 7s. 0d.	£ 413.18s. 8d.
Sandringham	41	289	5.4	1,573.0	£ 2,269.11s. 8d.	249.0	£ 185.14s. 4d.	£ 446.16s. 2d.
Marlborough	38	284	6.4	1,817.0	£ 2,629.18s. 1d.	301.0	£ 225. 5s.11d.	£ 451.18s. 4d.
Consort	41	277	4.9	1,372.5	£ 1,980. 6s. 3d.	242.0	£ 181.10s. 1d.	£ 387. 9s.10d.
Holyrood	40	304	6.7	2,039.5	£ 2,938. 1s. 3d.	332.0	£ 249. 1s. 6d.	£ 402.15s. 5d.
Windsor	42	296	6.2	1,849.5	£ 2,664.13s. 4d.	353.5	£ 266. 7s. 6d.	£ 532.17s. 0d.
Balmoral	42	298	6.6	1,961.5	£ 2,813.10s. 1d.	329.5	£ 245.17s.10d.	£ 443.11s. 4d.
Queen	38	249	3.9	995.0	£ 1,421.14s. 6d.	192.5	£ 144. 0s. 0d.	£ 392. 2s. 1d.
William Briggs	35	275	6.5	1,803.0	£ 2,604. 1s.10d.	260.5	£ 195. 5s. 0d.	£ 383.13s. 1d.
	388	2,801		16,072.0	£23,173.11s. 8d.	2,693.5	£2,014. 7s. 8d.	£4,205. 8s. 1d.

a Skippers and mates received a share of the catch after the deduction of certain expenses whereas the deckhands and engineers received a weekly wage plus 'poundage'. (See Chapter 5)

b Both of these vessels were operated at a loss, all the others showing profits of varying magnitude.

Source: *Financial Statements and Accounts of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1922, Archives, Grimsby Central Library.*

TABLE 15

(Continued)

(Details of Expenses)

225.

Trawls and Warps	Stores	Repairs	Dock Expenses and Sundries	Total	Weekly Hands and Sharemen ^a	Total Expenses
528. 7s. 5d.	£ 220. 6s. 8d.	£ 930. 14s. 8d.	£ 550. 3s. 7d.	£ 4,307. 17s. 6d.	£ 1,366. 7s. 2d.	£ 5,674. 4s. 8d.
505. 5s. 7d.	£ 232. 12s. 0d.	£ 966. 14s. 11d.	£ 551. 6s. 11d.	£ 5,114. 19s. 0d.	£ 1,406. 16s. 11d.	£ 6,521. 15s. 11d.
558. 2s. 0d.	£ 214. 9s. 2d.	£ 385. 12s. 6d.	£ 587. 18s. 4d.	£ 4,648. 4s. 2d.	£ 2,076. 10s. 9d.	£ 6,724. 14s. 11d.
853. 16s. 2d.	£ 288. 0s. 6d.	£ 731. 18s. 11d.	£ 706. 3s. 9d.	£ 5,887. 1s. 8d.	£ 2,335. 10s. 7d.	£ 8,222. 12s. 3d.
631. 12s. 6d.	£ 180. 8s. 11d.	£ 442. 8s. 9d.	£ 629. 7s. 10d.	£ 4,433. 4s. 2d.	£ 1,833. 0s. 8d.	£ 6,266. 4s. 10d.
492. 13s. 4d.	£ 262. 18s. 10d.	£ 809. 12s. 7d.	£ 654. 16s. 0d.	£ 5,809. 18s. 11d.	£ 2,208. 12s. 9d.	£ 8,018. 11s. 8d.
622. 2s. 1d.	£ 171. 0s. 7d.	£ 232. 14s. 2d.	£ 696. 5s. 0d.	£ 5,185. 19s. 8d.	£ 2,175. 3s. 11d.	£ 7,361. 3s. 7d.
509. 13s. 9d.	£ 175. 9s. 5d.	£ 267. 4s. 7d.	£ 672. 16s. 0d.	£ 5,128. 3s. 0d.	£ 2,223. 9s. 10s.	£ 7,351. 12s. 10d.
462. 7s. 11d.	£ 208. 10s. 3d.	£ 389. 14s. 6d.	£ 563. 15s. 5d.	£ 3,582. 4s. 8d.	£ 1,366. 13s. 0d.	£ 4,948. 17s. 8d.
324. 7s. 11d.	£ 215. 13s. 2d.	£ 376. 19s. 0d.	£ 570. 9s. 2d.	£ 4,670. 8s. 7d.	£ 1,550. 15s. 11d.	£ 6,221. 4s. 6d.
5,488. 7s. 10d.	£2,169. 9s. 6d.	£5,533. 14s. 7d.	£6,183. 7s. 0d.	£48,768. 1s. 4d.	£18,543. 1s. 6d.	£67,311. 2s. 10d.

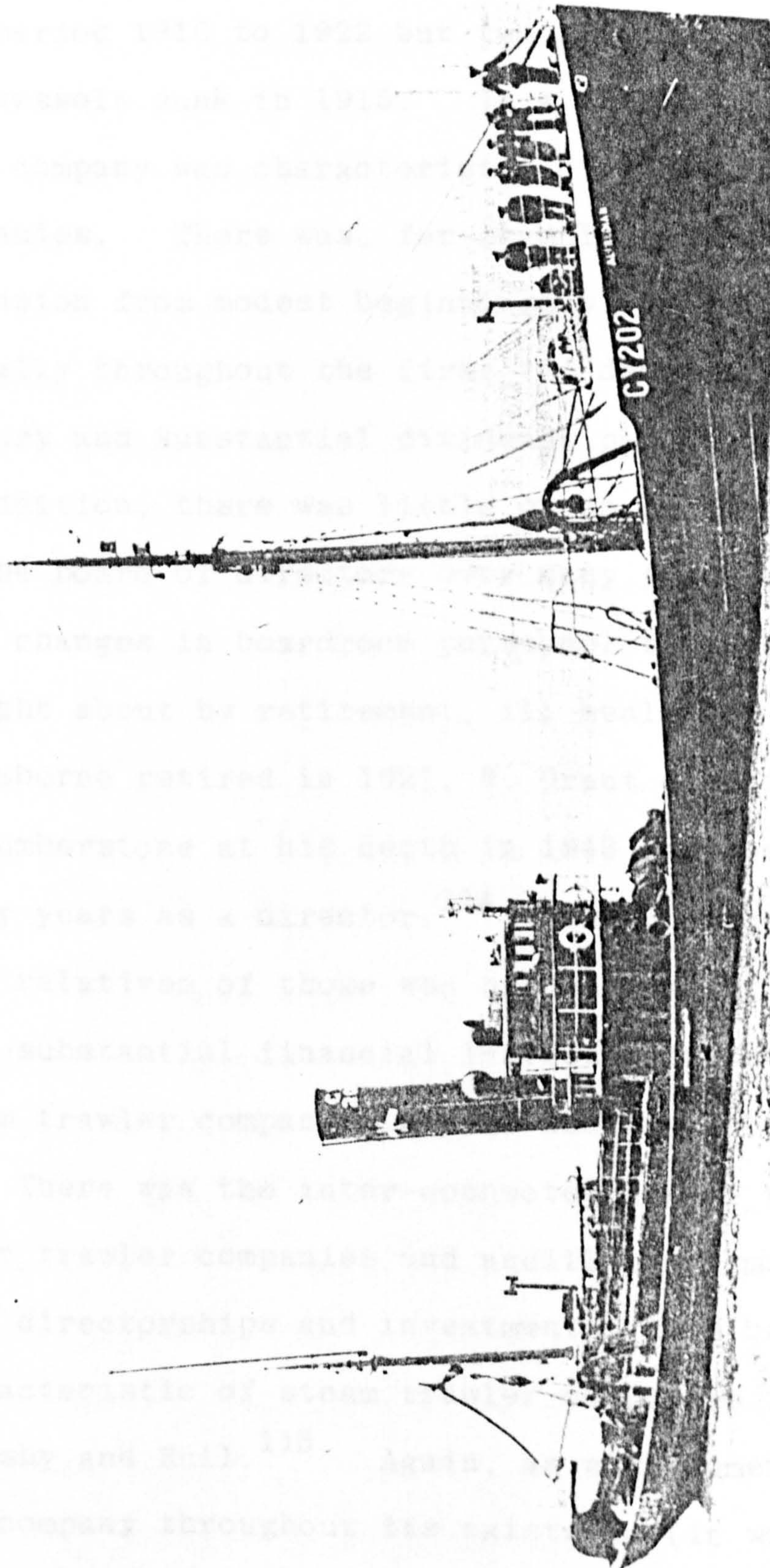
a Skippers and mates received a share of the catch after the deduction of certain expenses whereas the deckhands and engineers received a weekly wage plus 'poundage'. (See Chapter 5)

b Both of these vessels were operated at a loss, all the others showing profits of varying magnitude.

Source: *Financial Statements and Accounts of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1922,* Archives, Grimsby Central Library.

PLATE 6

The Grimsby steam trawler *Alfredian* built at Selby in 1919 for the Loyal Steam Fishing Company Ltd., net tonnage 132, HP179.



Source: *Fishing Archives*, Grimsby Central Library, Grimsby.

appears here to be a sign of conservative behaviour amongst the directors concerning the investment, of at least some of the profits, in new vessels. The table on page 223 shows that four vessels were acquired in the period 1910 to 1922 but two of these replaced the two vessels sunk in 1915. In a number of other ways, this company was characteristic of the early steam trawler companies. There was, for example, a phase of continuing expansion from modest beginnings with profits increasing annually throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century and substantial dividends paid to the shareholders. In addition, there was little or no change in the composition of the board of directors over many years and where there were changes in boardroom personnel they were almost always brought about by retirement, ill health or death, e.g. S. Osborne retired in 1921, W. Grant died in 1926 and F. Humberstone at his death in 1948 had completed almost fifty years as a director.¹¹⁴ Their successors were either male relatives, of those who had retired or died, or those with substantial financial interests in the company, other steam trawler companies and/or ancillary business firms.

There was the inter-connectedness of the company with other trawler companies and ancillary firms in terms of both directorships and investments, this being a major characteristic of steam trawler companies in Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull.¹¹⁵ Again, as with numerous other companies, the company throughout its existence (it was wound up in 1959) was to remain a small-scale capitalist organisation when

compared with firms in other industries. Within the fishing industry it was to stay in the middle range of trawler companies (see Table 18 page 327, Ownership of Trawlers in the Major Ports in Great Britain in 1934). In 1934, the company owned twelve trawlers, most of which were quite old and were presenting the company with substantially diminished returns in the late nineteen twenties and nineteen thirties.¹¹⁶

Such financial losses, interspersed with very small margins of profits, in the nineteen thirties were not unique to this company. The trawler companies were not immune from the effects of the economic recession with its attendant large scale unemployment. Nicolson makes the point thus:

"In Britain the trawling industry was badly hit, since the fourpenny fish supper was now a luxury that the thousands in the dole queues could not afford. Cod came down in price from 2s.6d. (12½p.) a stone in 1925 to about 1s.8d. (8p.) a stone in 1935, leaving little or no profit for the trawler owners. Landings clearly had to be regulated, and many vessels were laid up, while some trawlers came back from the Arctic with their holds deliberately kept half-empty."¹¹⁷

Added to the problems of the economic recession was the growing problem, at this time, of the inferior quality of the fish caught on the Arctic fishing grounds. This was due largely to the over-extended use of ice as a preservative and the fish from the Norwegian, Icelandic and Bear Island grounds was frequently sold in a less than fresh condition which, in marketing terms, harmed the reputation of the industry. Aberdeen suffered less in this respect, than Grimsby and Hull, since the majority of the Aberdeen vessels

fished much closer to home than did the larger vessels from the latter ports. Most of the Aberdeen trawlers fished in the northern North Sea grounds whilst others (known as middle water trawlers) trawled the grounds off the west coast of Scotland, and around the Orkneys, Shetlands and the Faroe Islands.¹¹⁸ However, the Scottish fisheries were not able to avoid the economic problems of the nineteen thirties.¹¹⁹

The last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth witnessed the emergence and consolidation of the limited liability trawler companies, some of which were to survive for many decades whilst others experienced a short, loss-ridden existence. For many of those who owned, or commanded, or had a financial share in, or sought to own, or command, or have a financial interest in the traditional sailing trawlers the consequences of the adoption of the steam trawler were quite profound both in economic and social terms. J.F. Duncan made the following complaint in the Independent Labour Party's publication '*The Socialist Review*' in 1908:

"It is not merely the economic position of the fishermen that is in danger. The whole social condition of large parts of Scotland is bound to be materially affected, and for the worst. Each village used to have its boatyard or boatyards, where the sail boats were built. Other industries clustered round the fishing. Now the steamers are built in steel shipbuilding yards and engineered in engineer shops far from these villages..... No longer will the family be able to ensure work and a living to the rising generation, or provide for the needs of the veteran who is past work, as it has been able to do in the past.....the old kindly communism will pass out with the brown-sailed boat.'¹²⁰

Those who were opposed to the adoption of the steam trawlers were powerless to prevent such a development. The forces which supported and encouraged this technological change and fishing innovation were too powerful. There was the power of capital investment which was encouraged by other powerful interest groups, e.g. the railway companies and the town councils and they, in turn, were aided by the state. In addition, the steam trawlers were not hampered, to the same extent as were the sailing vessels, by the material environment and weather conditions; also the former could use much heavier and bigger gear and they could fish in less heavily depleted fishing grounds. The steam trawler companies in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century could thus exploit a burgeoning market demand for their product amongst the populace, particularly the working class, of the large industrial urban conurbations in mainland Britain."¹²¹

In this chapter we have seen that the advent of the steam trawlers meant the gradual disappearance of the sailing smacks. Those who earned their employment in the sailing smacks reacted typically; they complained bitterly about the "unfair" competition, and the more seriously their livelihood was threatened, the more strident became their complaints until in the end they petitioned Parliament to ban the steam trawlers altogether from the fishing grounds, failing which they prophesied doomsday. This was the classic reaction to technological change by those disadvantaged by such change; it was understandable but ineffective.

In the case of fishing smack owners, there were two possible choices - to join in the protest against the steam trawlers or to invest as best they could, if at all, in these new type fishing vessels and, as we have seen, some of those able to do so, chose the latter strategy.

However, since the driving force behind the powerful factions financing the fishing industry was profit, and since the new mechanism of improved profits were the steam trawlers, two things were inevitable; these were first, the expansion of the steam trawler vessels and fleets, and second, the decline of the sailing smack fleets with attendant suffering and hardship for a great many fishermen and fishing communities. In a highly competitive industry, the energies of the more powerful were devoted to the pursuit of profit, not to the social problems and the other implications arising from technological change. This attitude was not, of course, confined to Britain; those who financed or profited from the fishing industry in other countries were also determined to run their affairs as profitably as possible, and so there began to emerge on the international scene all the consequences of international competition, namely conflict and dispute instead of co-operation and harmony. Thus, at both the national and international levels, social policy - such as it was - came a very poor second to the thrust of economic gain for the more powerful.

As numerous studies have shown, the history of technological change is inextricably linked with the social and economic history of responses to it and its consequences for particular socio-economic groups. Response to technological change is often of a defensive kind. Protection is sought for obsolescent technologies employed by groups to produce goods and services. People so threatened, with the impact of technological innovation, have frequently protested but often to no avail, since their dependence on a displaced technology leaves them in a powerless position in relation to those in control of the new processes. The social and economic costs of technological innovation are inflicted upon particular social groups within a community rather than the community as a whole.¹²²

REFERENCES

1. C.L. Cutting, *op.cit.* p.253.
2. J.E. Cronin, '*Industrial Conflict in Modern Britain*', Croom Helm, London, 1979, pp.50-52.
3. E.W. Holt observed in 1895 that:

"The Iceland grounds were.....discovered by liners, and it was not until 1891 that they were first discovered by a trawler. They have been worked, though not at great profit by a certain number of steam trawlers ever since; whether the fishery will continue is doubtful, but certainly the local authorities have done their best to discourage it."

E.W. Holt, *op.cit.* p.31. In fact, the Icelandic fishery continued to grow and Hull in particular became, over the next few decades, overwhelmingly dependent upon it and it was not until the nineteen-seventies that the Icelandic Government (Holt's "local authorities") finally banned foreign trawlers from the Icelandic fishing grounds, see Introduction and Chapters 7, 8 and 9.
4. *Fish Trades Gazette*, October 15th, 1901.
5. With a few notable exceptions, e.g. D. Boswell, J. Nicolson, J. Rule and J. Tunstall, most maritime historians, and other writers, have chosen to disregard the intensity of the controversy and conflict surrounding the adoption and activities of the steam trawler companies.
6. C.L. Cutting, *op.cit.* p.253.
7. F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.* p.271.
8. E.W. Holt, *op.cit.* p.7.
9. *The Ninth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1890* refers to the richness of these and adjoining grounds, pp.iv-vii.
10. *ibid.* pp.28-33.
11. *ibid.* p.30.
12. J. Nicolson, *op.cit.* p.72.

13. *ibid.* p.72.
14. A compromise, in respect of the conflicting claims of coastal nations, to exercise control over adjacent seas and the demands of other nations, which argued that all regions should be free to vessels of all nations, was advocated by a Dutch jurist, D. Bynkershock, in his book, '*De domino maris*', published in 1702. This conflict of interests, which had led to wars on several occasions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, could be resolved if coastal nations were to exercise sovereignty over adjacent seas that could be defended from onshore. Territorial waters would equal the range of a cannon, which was generally agreed to be approximately three miles. This became an international convention which survived until the middle of the twentieth century, at which time, a number of nations took a unilateral decision to extend territorial waters, in order to protect the local fisheries. See R.B. Bilder, *op.cit.* pp.42-57; G. Winder, '*International Territorial Limits in Relation to Fishing*' in '*Atlantic Ocean Fisheries*', G. Borgstrom and A.J. Keighway (ed.), Fishing News (Books) Ltd., London, 1961, pp.49-54.
15. *Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1909*, p.20.
16. This Act was the Trawling in Prohibited Areas Prevention Act, 1909, which extended to the whole of the U.K. those provisions of the Herring Fishery (Scotland) Act, 1889, that declared illegal the landing, or selling, of fish taken by trawlers from prohibited areas. The Act was vested conjointly in the Scottish Fishery Board and H.M. Customs. The Moray Firth was the largest and most important area to come within the operation of this legislation. *Thirty-second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1913*, pp. xvi - xvii.
17. *Fish Trades Gazette*, April 19th, 1894.
18. *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1900*, p.19.
19. *Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the Year 1907*, Appendix L, pp.222-223.
20. J. Nicolson, *op.cit.* p.73.
21. *Hull News*, Saturday, September 25th, 1886.

22. *Hull News*, Saturday, October 9th, 1886. The assertion, made by one of the participants, concerning the "close time of at least four months of the year when it is impossible.....to engage in fishing operations" sits awkwardly with the fact of the practice of winter fleeting established some years earlier and which gave rise to industrial disputes in both Hull and Grimsby, see Chapter 5.

23. There appears to be a consensus amongst fishermen and marine biologists that line-fishing and drift-net fishing are less harmful to fish stocks than is the practice of trawling. See J. Nicolson, *op.cit.* pp.116-118.

Hull News, Saturday, October 2nd, 1886.

24. A Number of Acts of Parliament were passed in the first decade of the twentieth century which sought to limit the areas in British territorial waters in which these steam vessels could operate.

25. *Fish Trades Gazette*, May 3rd, 1890.

26. *ibid.*

27. The phenomenon of inter-locking directorships in trawler companies and ancillary enterprises is discussed in more detail later in this chapter and in Chapters 5 and 6.

28. *Fish Trades Gazette*, May 3rd, 1890.

29. *ibid.*

30. *Grimsby News*, 23rd December, 1892.

31. E. Gillett, *'History of Grimsby'*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1969, p.271.

32. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.17.

33. E. Gillett, *op.cit.* p.270.

34. *Times*, 13th February, 1906.

35. Quoted in E. Gillett, *op.cit.* p.270.
36. J. Dyson, *op.cit.* p.248.
37. *ibid.* p.248.
38. F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.* pp.238-239.
39. M. Gray, *op.cit.* pp.178-179.
40. C.L. Cutting, *op.cit.* p.147. The Banks to which Cutting refers are the Grand Banks, that is a large, relatively shallow area of the North Atlantic Ocean lying south-east of Newfoundland. It is a rich breeding ground for cod and other demersal species.
41. E.J. March, *op.cit.*, p.199.
42. *ibid.* p.199.
43. W. Grenfell, *op.cit.* p.53. This observation of Grenfell's can be compared and contrasted with this quotation from March:

"In December 1939, I met the late Mr. H.L. Summers who told me of his father's remarkable rise from smack boy to owner of a big fleet. Orphaned through the sudden death of his father in the 1850's (sic), the lad was apprenticed at the age of 12½ by the Master Guardians and had to make his own way in the world. Skipper before he was twenty, this ambitious young man had his first smack built at Ramsgate in 1872.Smack after smack followed in rapid succession, no less than 59 being built to his order, many more were purchased second-hand.

E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.235.

44. J. Rule, *op.cit.* p.57.
45. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.245.
46. J. Rule, *op.cit.* p.57.

47. E.J. March, *op.cit.* pp.193-211.
48. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.16.
49. *ibid.* p.16.
50. *ibid.* p.16.
51. There are some boatyards in Scotland and England that have continued to this day to build wooden fishing vessels but many closed down. S. Gibson, '*More Scottish Fishing Vessels*', Arthur Heighway Publications, London, 1975.
52. E. Gillett, *op.cit.* p.232.
53. *ibid.* p.233.
54. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.183.
55. The researcher discovered copies of the company's accounts in the archives of the Grimsby Central Public Library, the Town Square, Grimsby. The accounts, which are somewhat incomplete, are catalogued under the heading: *Queen Steam Fishing Company Accounts*. The researcher wishes to acknowledge the courteous assistance he received from the members of the library's staff.
56. F.W. Humberstone was to remain a director for fully fifty years until his death in 1948. See *Annual Report of the Queen Steam Fishing Company for the Year ending 31st December, 1948*.
57. *Account of the Queen Steam Fishing Company from Date of Incorporation to 31st December, 1899*.
58. *Register of Members and Register of Transfers of Shares of Queen Steam Fishing Company, File Two, Archives, Grimsby Central Public Library*.
59. *op.cit.*
60. *Directors' Report, Queen Steam Fishing Company, dated 7th February, 1900*.

61. E.J. March, *op.cit.* p.184.
62. M. Gray, *op.cit.* p.179.
63. *Directors' Report for the Year Ending 31st December, 1900.*
Queen Steam Fishing Company.
64. *ibid.* p.5.
65. See the discussion in Chapter 6.
66. E. Gillett, *op.cit.* p.269.
67. *Annual Statements of the Queen Steam Fishing Company for the years 1901-1913.*
68. A. & R. Osborne (Steamers) Ltd., File, Archives, Grimsby Central Library, Town Square, Grimsby.
69. *Financial Statements of the Owners of the Steam Trawler Leys*
File, Archives of the Grimsby Central Public Library.
70. *Financial Statements and Reports of the Hunstanton Oyster Fisheries Limited* File, Archives of the Grimsby Central Public Library.
71. See. for example, A. Villiers, *op.cit.*
72. M. Gray, *op.cit.* p.178.
73. *ibid.* p.178.
74. *ibid.* p.178.
75. *ibid.* p.179.
76. *Lloyds List, Fishing Vessels Section, London, 1910.*
77. M. Gray, *op.cit.* p.179.
78. *ibid.* pp.179-180.

79. *Onward Steam Fishing Company (Aberdeen) Ltd., Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No.BT2-7636.*
80. *The Clan Steam Trawling Company Ltd., Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No.BT2-5216.*
81. *ibid. Prospectus, page 1.*
82. *Bon Accord Steam Fishing Company (Aberdeen) Ltd., Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No.BT2-4798.*
83. *The Caledonian Steam Trawler Company Ltd., Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No.BT2-4283.*
84. *Wetherly's Steam Fishing Company Ltd., Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No.BT2-6374.*
85. *ibid. Balance Sheet for 1912 and Copy of Register of Directors or Managers for the Year 1913.*
86. *North Sea Steam Trawling Company Limited, Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No.*
87. *ibid. List of Shareholders, 1902.*
88. *ibid.*
89. One Aberdeen steam trawler company, formed in 1890, had on its Board: an investment manager, a baker, a manager, a fish curer, a solicitor and a clothier, all of whom resided in Aberdeen; its shareholders included a solicitor, a fish curer, a trawler skipper, a confectioner, a millwright, a brick-maker, a builder, a manager, an assistant draper, an accountant, a commercial traveller, an optician, a clerk, a railway guard, a joiner, a teacher and two coal merchants, all of Aberdeen. In addition there was a Kirkcaldy factory worker, a Dunfermline plumber and an Edinburgh leather merchant. *The Aberdeen Steam Trawling and Fishing Company, Ltd., Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No.BT2-1973 (4146).*

90. *Balgownie Steam Trawler Fishing Company Ltd., Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No. BT2-5017.*
91. *op.cit. Prospectus, dated 22nd February, 1901.*
92. An indication of the scale of the development of steam trawlers in the early twentieth century can be obtained by a perusal of the figures of steam fishing vessels in other European countries at that time. Norway in 1913, for example, possessed 180 decked steam fishing vessels in a national fleet of some 12,292 fishing vessels, Sweden had in 1911, 18 steam trawlers out of a total fleet of 14,258 vessels, in Germany in 1911 there were 299 steam trawlers, thirty of which at that time regularly used Aberdeen as a home port, in a fleet of about 800 fishing vessels (there were other much smaller German fishing boats but these were not registered), and in Holland in 1911 there were 48 steam fishing vessels out of a fleet of approximately 768 registered fishing vessels. *Report of the Scottish Departmental Committee on the North Sea Fishing Industry, (appointed by the Secretary For Scotland), Edinburgh, 1914, Appendix 2, p.192.*
93. M. Gray, *op.cit.*
94. This list is not an exhaustive one.
95. M. Gray, *op.cit.*
96. *North Line Steam Fishing Company Ltd., Dissolved Companies File, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh, Catalogue No. b.*
97. A *Curator Bonis* is a person appointed by the Courts, in Scotland, to protect the affairs and interests of a mentally ill person when he or she is incapable of doing so himself or herself. See I.M. Ingram, G.C. Timbury and R.M. Mowbray, *Notes on Psychiatry*, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1976, p.127.
98. *ibid. Copy of Register of Directors or Managers for the year 1908.*
99. *ibid. Copy of Register of Directors or Managers for the year 1909.*
100. *ibid. Resolution passed at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Shareholders concerning the appointment of a Liquidator, 22nd April, 1914.*

101. *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1914.*
102. *ibid.*
103. *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1914.*
104. *Annual Report of the Inspectors for Sea Fisheries for year 1915.*
105. E.J. March, *op.cit.*, p.136.
106. *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1915.*
107. *ibid.*
108. *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1917.*
109. *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1918.*
110. *ibid.*
111. *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1919.*
112. *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1922.*
113. *ibid.* *Schedule of Investments in Other Companies.*
114. *Annual Statements of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the years 1921, 1926 and 1948.*
115. E. Gillett and K.A. MacMahon, *A History of Hull*, Oxford University Press for the University of Hull, Oxford, 1980, pp.319-321.
See also M. Gray, *op.cit.* pp. 179-181.

116. *Financial Statement of the Queen Steam Fishing Company Ltd., for the year ending 31st December, 1934.*
117. J. Nicolson, *op.cit.*, p.97.
118. *Second Report of the Sea Fish Commission for the United Kingdom*, HMSO, London, Cmd. 5130, 1938, p.30.
119. *ibid.* p.32.
120. J.F. Duncan, 'The Socialist Review', Vol.11(xi) 1909, Independent Labour Party, London, pp.832-933.
121. At the end of the First World War, steam trawler companies demanded the rehabilitation of the fried fish shop as an important element in the resumed development of their industry. See *Fish Trades Gazette*, July 20th, 1918.
122. C. Gersuny and J.J. Poggie, 'Luddites and Fishermen', *Maritime Studies and Management*, 1974, No.2.

C H A P T E R 5

EMERGENCE OF TRADE UNIONISM
IN THE CATCHING SECTOR OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY

It is widely believed that trade unionism first emerged in the British fishing industry as a result of the employment of engineers on the new steam trawlers. Tunstall, in his account of the development of Hull as a fishing port, gives currency to this belief:

"The steam trawlers, of course, involved the use of technical men to look after the engines. Three engineers were normally carried, a chief, a second, and a fireman-trimmer. The engineers with their respect for efficiency and their long tradition of trade unionism were a very important new force in the occupation. In 1895 the trawler-owners in Grimsby reduced the engineers' wages by 2s.6d. a weekend and, in consequence, a union was formed."¹

In similar vein, K.D. Buckley, in his study of trade unionism in Aberdeen in the period 1878 to 1900 [which was published in 1955] states:

"Yet another organisation formed at this time (the late eighteen nineties) was that of the trawl fishermen. An attempt was made to form a seamen's union again, but was apparently unsuccessful. However, in 1899 the Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessels Enginemen and Firemen's Union was formed and it quickly established itself as a stable body: within a few months it had enrolled more than 400 members. It was not an organisation of unskilled workers, since it deliberately excluded from membership deck-hands and cooks."²

Actually, trade unionism amongst some groups of fishermen in several ports preceded the adoption of the steam trawlers, although this major technological development clearly stimulated further growth in trade union membership.³

Whilst trade unionism appeared and appears even now to be somewhat incongruent a phenomenon in small fishing villages, the separation of ownership and labour in the sailing trawlers created the conditions in which some fishermen-employees of the trawler owners came to perceive the need for trade unionisation as a means of protecting their interests.⁴ The growth in the ownership of sailing trawlers combined with changing employment practices and working conditions in an alien material environment to which the crews were subjected encouraged the emergence of trade unionism in several fishing ports in Scotland and England.⁵

The separation of ownership and labour in this sector of the industry in the late nineteenth century is illustrated in the contemporary crew lists and employment agreements (see, for example, Appendix 1, page 558. Crew Lists and Agreements for the Aberdeen Trawler *Admiral*, dated 31.12.1886). The *Admiral*, a sailing trawler, registered tonnage 81 tons and built in 1883, had a crew of five, some of whom, the most senior, received a share and others, known as the "weekly hands", were paid a weekly wage:

".....and the net amount arising from such Sale, (of the catch) after deducting all usual, customary, and necessary expenses shall be divided into eight parts or shares of which $4\frac{4}{8}$ shall be for the Owner of the Trawler, and $3\frac{4}{8}$ shares shall be for the Crew, which last-mentioned shares shall be sub-divided amongst the Crew in the proportions set forth opposite to their respective names in this Agreement.

Skipper to receive	1 $\frac{3}{8}$ shares:	20/-	weekly allotment
Second Hand to receive	1 $\frac{1}{8}$ shares:	15/-	" "
Third Hand to receive	1 share:	10/-	" "
Deck Hand to receive		16/-	wages per week
Cook to receive		14/-	" " " "6

The deductions of ".....all usual, customary and necessary expenses" were frequently the cause of disputation between trawler crews and their owners and, as shall be discussed below, led to industrial stoppages, that is, the men refused to sail their vessels until a satisfactory outcome to their grievances had been put into effect.⁷

Throughout the nineteenth century fishermen in numerous communities had formed friendly societies, in order to give themselves and their families some protection in the form of sickness and accident benefits, pensions and funeral grants.⁸ In Scotland, friendly societies of fishermen were established in Granton, Peterhead, Aberdeen, Cockenzie, Port Seton and Newhaven.⁹ These organisations were, in the strictest sense of the word, friendly societies and not trade unions. For example, the one established in Peterhead was known as the Peterhead Fishermen's Benevolent Society.¹⁰

There were similar societies to be found in several English ports in the nineteenth century. Friendly societies and trade unions were not, however, mutually exclusive voluntary associations.¹¹ Most of the latter provided the sickness and funeral allowances that are associated with the former.¹² This can be seen in the stated objectives and rules of the Port of Hull Trawl Fishermen's Friendly Protection Society, (PHTFFS), which was created by a number of sailing smack skippers, mates and, what were known as,

'senior fishermen' in Hull in September 1879. Whilst its members, who paid a fortnightly contribution of 1s.0d., perceived the Hull society as a trade union it bore the characteristic features of a friendly society.¹³

For example, any member injured at sea providing "the accident was not caused by drunkenness or disorderly conduct" received sickness benefit payments of 10s.0d. per week for 26 weeks, 7s.6d. per week for the next 26 weeks and, if needs be, 5s.0d. for the following 52 weeks. There were rules of conduct which an injured member had to follow during his period of recuperation ashore; he could not leave his house before seven a.m., or be out of doors after nine p.m., in the period 1st April to 30th September. Between 1st October and 31st March he was not allowed to leave his home before eight a.m. or after seven p.m.¹⁴

The society paid a death benefit of £14 to the next of kin on the death of a member. A member received £10 on the death of his wife, this sum being reduced to £5 for a second wife. The payment of the death benefit, however, was determined by Rule 21, "Improper Conduct of Member's Wife":

"Should any member's wife be living in a state of adultery or prostitution, apart and distinct from her husband, for the period of twelve months at the time of her death, the said member shall not be entitled under this rule to the funeral allowance for such wife, and should a wife be living in adultery or prostitution apart and distinct from her husband at the time of her husband's death, the said wife shall have no claim to the funeral allowance for the said member, although she be the nominee for the funeral allowance, but the committee of management shall have discretionary powers as to what amount, if any shall be paid in either case."¹⁵

The objectives and rules of the PHTFFPS suggest a closer affiliation to Methodism and the temperance movement than to a radical or socialist ideology. It was a trade union of share fishermen, weekly hands being excluded from membership, and in its ranks were to be found smack owners, that is skippers who were 'working out' their vessels. Changes in employment relationships and working conditions and practices encouraged a small number of these fishermen to form the society in the first place. One of the founder members, R. Manton, recalled some eleven years later:

"The apprenticeship system was on the wane, owing to the laxity of the employers; the winter fleeting had commenced in Grimsby, a system which the men knew would tend to serious loss of life, and keep them away from their homes for longer periods than they usually were under the old system (single boating) and there were rumours afloat that the employers intended to commence the system at Hull. These and many other grievances induced the men to band themselves together for mutual protection. Even at that time some of the Hull smacks were sent to fish with the Grimsby fleet, but the men were openly dissatisfied with the system, and openly expressed their dislike to it (*sic*) before it was introduced at Hull. Another grievance that the fishermen complained of was the system of boycotting that was practised by the employers, and which, in many cases was tyrannical and severe. If a man committed an error of judgement he was court-martialled by the Smack-Owners Association or Insurance Committees (staffed by owners) and, without a chance being given to him to defend himself, was in many cases severely dealt with."¹⁶

Encouraged by the formation in early 1879 of the Grimsby Trawl Fishermen's Protective Society, the Hull society was formed at two inaugural meetings on 16th and 17th September, 1879.¹⁷ The meetings were held in the Neptune Inn,

Neptune Street, Hessle Road, which is close to the fish dock. Manton stated:

"Two fishermen from Grimsby, and the Secretary of the Grimsby Society attended on the second evening, G. Smaller and H. Ellis, and S. Longworth respectively. A Grimsby engineer, J. Booth, also attended; an ardent trade unionist, he gave us sound practical advice, as did Mr. Longworth and our brothers from Grimsby, Messrs. Smaller and Ellis. On the 18th September, 1879 our first banking account with the Hull Savings Bank was opened with a deposit of 5s.0d."¹⁸

In 1880 it was widely believed that there were upwards of 20,000 people directly, or indirectly, economically dependent on the fishing industry in Hull, and that the industry's capital was of the order of some £500,000.¹⁹ There was, however, a good deal of unrest, as Manton claimed, amongst those who formed the crews of sailing smacks. One source of conflict centred upon the decline of the apprenticeship system in Hull and Grimsby. In both ports, the smack owners had employed apprentices on their vessels for several decades. Until the eighteen-nineties a typical sailing smack would have, in its crew of five, two or three apprentices.²⁰

These apprentices or 'fisher-lads' as they were known, were, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, recruited from workhouses throughout Britain and were indentured to their masters from the age of twelve upwards. Smack owners had had to recruit from workhouses, reformatories and prisons since the expansion in the industry in the two ports had exposed a major shortage in the local labour supply. Apprentices were viewed by the employers as low

cost labour and their domination was buttressed by the *Merchant Shipping Act of 1854* (17 and 18 Vict.c.104), which gave the smack owners the right to order the arrest, without warrant, of apprentices and other crew-members who deserted their vessels.²¹ Those who chose to desert were, when arrested, summarily tried and given a rather sparse choice between returning to their vessels or going to gaol. In numerous instances, the apprentices preferred the latter to the former. In Grimsby, for example, the number of apprentices sent to Lincoln gaol increased each year from 20 in 1872 to 244 in 1877.²² Despite the threat of imprisonment, many apprentices broke away from their indentures, absconded and, as far as their guardian employers were concerned, disappeared without trace. The *Merchant Shipping Act of 1854* strengthened the power of the employers over what was a virtually powerless segment of the workforce.

With the *Merchant Shipping Act of 1880*, however, the state reduced somewhat the power of the employers, in that certain provisions of the Act meant that an apprentice could refuse to go to sea without automatically being imprisoned upon arrest. The smack owners were hostile in their reaction to this Act; they claimed that the apprenticeship system was an essential employment practice, and that prison sentences for recalcitrant apprentices had to be re-introduced, in order to persuade these employees to go to sea. A local Member of Parliament observed, shortly after the passing of the Act, that:

".....since the law was promulgated there had been a perfect mutiny amongst fishing apprentices.well, I get complaints from the fishing interests of Hull; I get them from Grimsby. And I am told that these young gentlemen, being wide awake as to the present law, are in such a state of mutiny that the owners of the fishing smacks are positively cancelling their indentures, because they find the difficulty and trouble of getting their apprentices to perform their duty so great that it is no longer worth their while to keep them."²³

In the period 1881-1882 the magistrates at Hull gaol only sixteen apprentices for offences unrelated to desertion whereas the Grimsby magistrates during the same period of time imprisoned no less than 279 apprentices most of whom served their sentences in the Hedon Road gaol in Hull.²⁴ The use of the courts and gaol sentences indicate both the powerlessness of the apprentices, *vis-à-vis* their employers and the state, and their resentment anent the employment relationship and the working and living conditions to which they were subject. It should be pointed out that the 1880 Act did not in itself lead to an amelioration in the economic and social circumstances of the apprentices but it did allow them to break their employment contract, at least in Hull, with something approaching impunity.²⁵ That is to say, from 1880 they could desert, whilst on shore, without the threat of up to three months' imprisonment.

The discontent amongst smack-owners in Hull and Grimsby, concerning the 1880 Act, led them to the despatch of a deputation to the Board of Trade in London where they demanded, of the President and his board, legislation which would restore the apprenticeship system within its

former legal framework. The President, Joseph Chamberlain, MP, replied to the demand for new legislation with the comment:

"Surely such a state of things does not exist in any trade or business. Either the men do not like your bargains, or they must be the very worst class of men to be found. What you say is that you cannot get men to work except under threats of imprisonment. That would be reducing matters to a state of serfdom. As to the apprenticeship system we hear of the most cruel treatment of apprentices being common amongst smack-owners in Hull and Grimsby.²⁶

Throughout the late eighteen sixties and the eighteen seventies rumours concerning the exploitation and ill-treatment of apprentices had reached the ears of a number of Boards of Guardians of Unions²⁷ and the Board of Trade itself. The allegations of brutality which gave rise to these rumours, coupled with the growing public disquiet over the imprisonment of apprentices for desertion and other offences, led to numerous newspaper articles which were highly critical of the apprenticeship system.²⁸ An illustration of the public concern is an article that appeared in the Lincolnshire Chronicle in 1873:

"Lincoln rings with indignation at the treatment these lads receive at the hands of the authorities. The lads are brought by train, which generally arrives about 9.30 p.m. and are heavily chained together, in numbers from three to five, and in this way are marched through the busiest part of the High Street of our city for more than a mile to their destination."²⁹

Following the murders of two apprentices on two Hull smacks in December 1881 and February 1882 respectively,³⁰ there were increased demands for some form of public inquiry into the employment relationship between smack-owners and

their apprentices and the working conditions of the latter. The smack-owners for their part and for entirely different reasons were not averse to an investigation of their sector of the industry. The Grimsby Smack-Owners Association sent a letter of protest in 1882 to Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., at the Board of Trade, in which they stated:

"We the undersigned smack-owners of Great Grimsby, representing 672 smacks. beg leave to state from the knowledge, which many years of experience has given us the opportunity of acquiring, that in our opinion if the apprenticeship system were to be allowed to die out or become unduly trammelled with Board of Trade or other control, the effect on the trade would be most disastrous. It is to the apprenticeship system that the trade must look for a regeneration."³¹

Shortly afterwards, Chamberlain appointed a House of Commons select committee:

"To inquire into and report whether any and what legislation is desirable with a view to placing the relations between the Owners, Masters and Crews of Fishing Vessels on a more satisfactory basis."

The members of the Committee were C.M. Norwood, M.P., (Chairman), E. Birkbeck, M.P., E. Heneage M.P., Alderman T. Leake, Mayor of Hull and T. Gray, Assistant Secretary of the Marine Department of the Board of Trade.³² It could not be argued that Gray was an impartial state official where these issues were concerned since, following the enactment of the 1880 Act, he had advised smack-owners that they could continue to enforce, through the local courts, the imprisonment of disobedient apprentices. He

communicated this advice to the owners shortly after the Act was passed.³³ Gillett has contended:

"There was a general disposition (amongst members of the committee) to discover interpretations of the facts which would be favourable to the owners. Before their sittings began Norwood as chairman, explained to Heneage that one of their tasks would be to find the best way of protecting owners against losses caused by desertions."³⁴

Most of the select committee's investigative work was performed in Hull and Grimsby since the apprenticeship system was virtually unknown in other fishing ports.³⁵

The committee examined smack-owners, skippers, fishermen (former apprentices), senior police officers, clergymen, superintendents of hostels for apprentices and representatives of boards of guardians for various unions and others.³⁶

Members of the Port of Hull Trawl Fishermen's Society who gave evidence to the committee expressed their complete agreement with the owners concerning both the importance of the apprenticeship system and the need to strengthen the sanction of imprisonment against those apprentices who broke away from their indentured employment.³⁷ They also stated to the committee that they had not witnessed any ill-treatment of apprentices at sea.³⁸

Confirmation of this identity of views between employers and trade unionists, of the apprenticeship system, was provided by speeches made at the annual congress of the Trades Union Congress, which was held in Nottingham in September 1883, a few days after the committee had published its findings by the two delegates representing

the PHTFFPS. One of the two delegates, W. Ashford, complimented the members of the committee for the kindness and courtesy with which they had been received and he went on to comment on the allegations of ill-treatment of apprentices. In the report of the congress it appears as follows:

".....acts of violence were the exception rather than the rule. He himself was brought up to the sea from very tender years, and his experience was that fishermen differed not one iota from any other class of mankind, and the investigations made by the Board of Trade for that purpose gave it as their opinion that boys on board fishing vessels were humanely and kindly treated."³⁹

Ashford's fellow-delegate, J. Carrick, addressed his remarks to the congress in similar vein. He also stated that he and his colleagues had been kindly treated by the committee of inquiry and that the much-discussed brutal treatment of the apprentices occurred only in exceptional cases.⁴⁰

During its investigations, the committee elicited the information that under the provisions of the *Merchant Shipping Act, 1854*, there was no legal requirement for a smack-owner, or skipper, to produce an immediate report of the serious injury to, or even death of, a member of the crew of a fishing vessel unless an injury or death had been incurred by damage to the vessel or its loss.⁴¹ Some thirty years had elapsed since the passing of the Act but the committee found that the position was unchanged. The purpose of any examination was to determine the extent of the damage done to a smack in, for example, a gale or a collision with another vessel. The investigation into serious injury

or loss of life in such a case was an appendage to the main enquiry. The legal position on the loss of life, or limb, at sea in contrast to damage done to property is illustrated by the following exchange which took place between the chairman of the committee and the Chief Constable of Hull, J. Campbell, when the committee examined witnesses in Hull on 20th September, 1882:

"Q.772 (Chairman): Mr. Campbell, you are, I believe, Chief Constable of this borough? Yes, sir.

Q.773 How long have you been so? For two years.

Q.774 When death occurs at sea on board smacks are they reported to you? Yes, sir, information is given at the nearest police station either by the captain or the owner.

Q.777 What is the course you pursue when you receive this notification? We make an entry in the occurrence book of the report made by the captain, and the matter drops if the friends do not interpose.

Q.778 Have you ever taken any steps to inquire into the cause of death? Not hitherto, and I believe there is no power for any authority in the town to do so.

Q.779 The causes of death given by the return vary very much? Yes, it does.

Q.780 Now I understand the causes of death are those given to you and you have no means of judging their accuracy? Quite so."

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In its report, the committee was critical of the Act of 1880.

"We have heard.....much complaint of the deterioration in the morals and conduct of the apprentices; of their subordination; and of their readiness to avail themselves of the Act of 1880 to virtually cancel their indentures and to evade their obligations by deserting or refusing to join their vessels. There can be no doubt of the general correctness of these allegations, and of the serious annoyance and loss to which some of the masters (owners) have been subjected."43

On the issue of ill-treatment of apprentices, the committee was of the opinion that the allegations concerning widespread cruelty were with little foundation in fact, and such incidences were infrequent:

".....though cases of gross cruelty and deliberate ill-treatment are rare, and the masters and skippers, as a body, are humane and considerate, yet there are exceptional cases in which lads are treated in a brutal manner. The recent convictions of the skipper for the murder of the lad, Henry Pepper, on board the smack *Rising Sun*, of Hull, and of the second hand for the murder of the lad, Peter Hughes, on board the smack *Gleaner*, of Hull, and of the skipper and of the second and third hands of the smack, *Achievement*, of Grimsby, for cruel, debasing and disgusting treatment of two lads at sea, have disclosed beyond all doubt a state of things which, however, exceptionable it may be, renders some legislative measures for the protection of the lads imperatively necessary."44

The committee expressed itself in favour of the apprenticeship system with some reservations. For example, the committee made the recommendation, which was accepted by the Government, that the local Superintendent of Mercantile Marine should involve himself in the drawing up of indentures and employment agreements, that he ought to be given *in loco parentis* authority over the apprentices at a port and that he should investigate all allegations of ill-treatment of his charges.⁴⁵

Whilst an examination of this report reveals the bias of the committee members towards the interests of the smack-owners, the observation has to be made that the apprenticeship system in the two ports was not characterised by unrelieved evil and cruelty. Boswell, on the basis of his analysis of the system in Grimsby, states:

"There can be no doubt that some of the fishing apprentices who sailed from Grimsby were badly treated but it is difficult to determine the extent of the ill-treatment. The majority of the smack-owners and skippers were fair if rough men who obviously had the interests of their apprentices at heart. There were, nevertheless, a number of men over the years who did treat the boys under their care with cruelty. How many men there were of this type must remain an unknown factor."⁴⁶

For the apprentices, the committee's report and recommendations brought about some amelioration in their circumstances but the legislation that was enacted in the same year, nonetheless, accentuated the powerlessness of their position *vis-à-vis* their employers and the state. For example, if an apprentice refused to obey a lawful command, during the period of his engagement, he could be imprisoned for up to four weeks, with hard labour, and lose two days pay.⁴⁷ In addition, the same Act specified, he was not allowed to give notice of his decision not to sail on a vessel for whatever reason.⁴⁸ Moreover, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine was given the power to issue the warrant of arrest for any apprentice who failed to join his vessel, or who absconded, or who was accused, by his master or skipper, of wilful disobedience.⁴⁹

By 1883 the apprenticeship system was in a state of collapse in Hull even although it was to survive, albeit in an attenuated form, in Grimsby for another forty years (see Table 16, page 259, *Number of Indentured Apprentices in Grimsby in period 1882 to 1912*). It will be seen from Table 16 that a substantial proportion of the apprentices were recruited from unions, reformatories and prisons. Allegations of the ill-treatment of apprentices were made after 1883,⁵⁰ and apprentices continued to be sentenced to terms of imprisonment, for various offences including wilful disobedience.⁵¹

As late as 1890, complaints were still being made by Grimsby smack-owners and the trade press that imprisonment of a few weeks' duration was not a sufficient deterrent and that other sanctions ought to be employed in order to gain the compliance of this section of the workforce. An article in the *Fishing Trades Gazette* in 1890 proposed an alternative deterrent; *physical punishment*:

".....one of the most unsatisfactory and, at the same time, most difficult features of the fish trade at Grimsby, is found in the fact that the place occupies an unenviable position of pre-eminence in regard to the number of fisher-boys sent to gaol for disobeying orders. We believe that upon an average of two hundred fishing-apprentices are sent to prison every year for terms varying from seven to twenty-eight days for this offence! This is a serious state of affairs, and one to which we think it right to call public attention..... Of course, the question is asked, 'What is the remedy?' A suggestion has been made to substitute birching for imprisonment, and we think it has much to commend it. It is certainly worthy of a trial, for so far as deterring influence is concerned matters cannot be worse than they are. It is very probable that to the younger lads the smart,

TABLE 16

Number of Indentured Apprentices in Grimsby
in Period 1822-1912,
Origins of Some and Number of Those Killed at Sea.

Year	Number of boys signing indentures in that year	Number of boys coming from Unions and other Public Bodies	Number of Apprentices who signed indentures in that year, who who were subsequently killed at sea
1882	419	144	21
1883	366	158	18
1884	413	184	29
1885	290	85	19
1886	344	139	17
1887	339	180	19
1888	368	207	25
1889	348	201	22
1890	299	203	22
1891	214	125	13
1892	277	167	7
1893	281	161	-a
1894	214	126	5
1895	137	65	4
1896	151	56	2
1897	134	75	4
1898	140	57	5
1899	111	62	2
1900	79	30	1
1901	61	22	2
1902	61	26	1
1903	61	35	1
1904	59	39	1
1905	51	26	3
1906	43	28	3
1907	75	50	5
1908	39	16	3
1909	61	33	2
1910	67	34	3
1911	28	14	3
1912	41	19	1

Source: D. Boswell, *Sea Fishing Apprentices of Grimsby*,
 Grimsby Public Libraries and Museum, Grimsby,
 1973, pp.55, 56 and 91.

a No information concerning the deaths of apprentices for
 that year.

and to the older ones the shame, of this kind of punishment would make them come before the magistrates with less frequency and less complacency than they now walk up to receive their 'fourteen days hard'." ⁵²

This kind of exhortation was ignored by the state and by 1890 the apprenticeship system had virtually disappeared from Hull and was in continuing decline in Grimsby. In a period of expansion in the industry between the eighteen-sixties and eighteen-eighties, the smack-owners utilised the apprenticeship system as a means by which they recruited and managed labour, which they believed would be both cheap and tractable. The rapidly growing fishing industry in Hull and Grimsby could not find all of the sea-going labour it required from the two communities since the industry was of recent origin in both places. ⁵³ The major incentive that the apprenticeship system offered the smack-owners was that of cost advantage since apprentices could be paid low wages over several years of indentured employment. Another anticipated gain was that these teenage boys, many of whom were, as outlined above, recruited from workhouses, would prove to be simple to command.

On both counts, however, the system turned out to be an economic and managerial failure. ⁵⁴ As Boswell observed, the smack-owners of Hull and Grimsby were unaware of, or chose to ignore, the historic example of the failure of such a system in the English cotton and woollen mills in the first half of the nineteenth century. ⁵⁵ As the system atrophied, the smack-owners had to turn increasingly to the employment of 'weekly hands'. These employees were regarded

with some disfavour by owners; members of the PHTFFPS, and the Board of Trade committee seemed to have formed a low opinion of these men:

"(They are) 'Lads', called casuals who engage themselves for a trip or trips and who receive wages, in money, as members of the crew for the time being. Many of them are vagrants or tramps who have been 'in trouble' before they enter the fishing trade, and are too often the cause of mischief and trouble afterwards."⁵⁶

If the apprenticeship system proved to be something of a failure from the smack-owners' perspective, it was also a failure where many of the apprentices were concerned, even although some boys eventually became skippers and there were those who became smack-owners.⁵⁷ For the majority of the apprentices, it was a failure in the sense that they were given little encouragement to acquire the skills and knowledge that would facilitate progress to the ranks of senior fishermen and skippers. The traditional regulations governing the limited numbers of entrants to a trade or craft apprenticeship were ignored by many of the smack-owners who looked upon their apprentices as low-cost labour, which was recruited most usefully from public institutions. Also, the apprentices, when not subjected to ill-treatment, had to contend with the harsh working and living conditions, and autocratic superiors, on board the smacks.⁵⁸ One more burden was the role of institutions of the state which were used against those apprentices who chose to be disobedient, rather than compliant, in the workplace and in their relations with their masters. Here, then, was a section of the sea-going workforce that was

powerless in the face of employers and the state in the late nineteenth century.

Members of the two trade unions in the ports, the overwhelming majority of whom had served an apprenticeship, showed little sympathy for the plight of the apprentices. In this regard and in their hostility to the adoption of the steam trawlers they revealed an insensitive conservatism in the face of change. Abolition of the apprenticeship system would have removed a source of low-cost labour for those who aspired to vessel ownership and the high cost of steam trawlers made those aspirations unrealisable, for all but a tiny minority of senior fishermen. This conservatism of perspective was analogous to that prevailing in the early craft unions and for the employers in the fishing industry it meant that they were dealing with weak organisations, in which members had conflicting aspirations and loyalties. There were, however, issues upon which the two societies were willing to engage in labour disputes with their employers; one of which was the imposition of winter fleeting.

The fishermen-employees of the smack-owners objected strongly to both the extension of the fleeting practice, to the winter months, and the boxing system. Boxing which was an arduous task in fair weather proved, on occasion, to be dangerous in poor weather conditions. This can be seen in contemporary newspaper accounts of the task. For example, on 3rd December, 1880, the *Eastern Morning News* contained the following account of the drowning of an apprentice:

"James Cooper, master of the smack *Britannia*, reported to the Hull police that, when fishing on the 28th ultimo, about 160 miles from Spurn, he sent Frederick Goddard, deckboy, 16 years of age, a native of Sheffield, and an apprentice with Mr. Samuel Edwardes, the owner of the smack, together with the second and third-hands in a boat, to convey boxes of fish on board the steam cutter. On the return journey the boat was struck by a tremendous sea and capsized. The second and third-hands were rescued by a passing vessel but Goddard was drowned, and his body not recovered."⁵⁹

In 1880, disputes between smack owners and the two trade unions arose in both Grimsby and Hull concerning the introduction of winter fleeting. Hitherto, fleeting had been confined to the spring and summer months but with the introduction of five steam cutters in Grimsby in 1878, at a cost of £6,000 per vessel, and six similar vessels in Hull early in 1880,⁶⁰ the owners sought to introduce fleeting throughout the year. Their decision was based upon their perceived economic need to have these transport vessels operating throughout the year. The conflict between employers and employees in Grimsby was aggravated by another decision taken by the operators of the steam cutters, The Great Grimsby Ice Company, to deduct some of the expenses of the voyages between the fleets and the ports from the fishermen's shares of the sales of the catch.⁶¹

Early in September 1880, a number of Grimsby skippers and mates withdrew their labour and within two weeks there were some 700 men involved with over 400 smacks moored in the fish dock. The strike which was co-ordinated by the Grimsby Trawl Fishermen's Protective Society, which as

with the PHTFFPS, comprised skippers and mates (or 'first hands') was supported by the 'weekly hands' who were wage earners, not share-fishermen. The strikers made some concessions to those skippers who were working out their vessels on mortgages and to those vessels which provided the sole financial support for widows and their dependants. In these instances, the vessels were allowed to sail with no infringements from pickets.

The dispute lasted just over three weeks and it ended with the capitulation of the owners on both issues of winter fleeting and deductions of expenses. An article in the *Times* on the 24th September stated:

"The strike of fishermen in the Grimsby trawling trade has been brought to a sudden termination by the virtual submission of the Smackowners' Association (sic). The men struck a month ago against certain reductions from their shares which the owners proposed to insert in the agreement with the men. The men resisted, and came out on strike, causing the laying up of smacks representing £500,000 of capital. The men presented a firm front, and a prolonged stoppage was expected, but yesterday morning it was suddenly announced that the Smack Owners' Association had passed a resolution to the effect that, owing to the want of unity among the owners, the reforms advocated could not be persisted in, and each member might get his vessels to sea in the manner he thought best."⁶²

An important contributory factor, in the lack of unity amongst smack-owners, was the dispersion of vessel-ownership. That is to say, there were numerous owners of single vessels and others with two or three vessels who were concerned about the financial consequences of a long stoppage and

they attempted to negotiate, independently of the smack-owners' association, with the trade union. The effect of the dispute was that winter fleeting was not introduced at Grimsby for another five years and the Grimsby Ice Company sold its steam cutters.

Across the River Humber in Hull, members of the PHTFFPS voiced their opposition to the introduction of winter fleeting. Meetings were called at which resolutions condemning the practice as dangerous were passed unanimously by those present.⁶³ A number of letters were sent to the Hull Smack-owners' Association requesting the discontinuation of fleeting between October 1st to April 1st. These requests, however, were ignored by the owners of the three major fleets in Hull, two of which had each purchased three steam cutters. An editorial in a Hull newspaper outlined the owners' position on the issue:

"The smack owners say it is for the benefit of the fishing trade of Hull that the steam cutters should work all the year round. Had not the steam cutters been introduced, they state that at least one third of the smacks in the port would have been lying idle at the present moment. The public convenience is also much enhanced, they say, by the use of the steam cutters through the winter. By this means fresh fish is nearly always obtainable, and the fish has not to remain in the holds of the smacks for such a long period as it otherwise would and get into bad condition. Each of the companies, viz., the Hull Steam Fishing and Ice Company and the Great Northern Steam Fishing Company in their employ, and the smack owners do not perceive why these vessels, which have cost them such an outlay of money, should be idle for several months of the year."⁶⁴

On October 16th, members of the PHTFFPS took the decision to withdraw their labour until the decision of the

smack-owners to introduce winter fleeting was withdrawn. In the initial stages of the dispute the Hull Smack Owners' Association refused to negotiate with the PHTFFPS, since the former claimed that the latter was not representative of the Hull labour force.⁶⁵ For their part, the members of the Hull trade union were encouraged by what they regarded as a clear victory for the Grimsby fishermen over their employers anent the same issue.⁶⁶ The Grimsby trade union sent messages of support to the Hull strikers and loaned to the PHTFFPS the sum of £80.⁶⁷

One objective, which, in industrial and political disputes, is common to both sides is the need to win the sympathy of a wider audience.⁶⁸ Today, one encounters a readiness displayed by, say, employers' representatives and trade union representatives to disseminate information, concerning industrial disputes, to as broad an audience as possible by way of the mass media.⁶⁹ Each side attempts to convey to the audience the legitimacy of its case.

M. Lipsky contends:

"To the extent that successful protest activity depends on appealing to, and/or threatening, other groups in the community, the communications media set the limits of protest activity."⁷⁰

Attempts to appeal to a wide audience have a long history in British industrial relations.⁷¹ In the dispute in Hull in 1880, the PHTFFPS engaged the services of the town crier to announce the decision to withdraw labour and, also, to present the society's case for taking industrial action against the owners. He, the town crier, was

instructed to parade up and down the fish dock, but he was prevented from doing so by the Dock Company which prohibited him from its premises, the PHTFFPS alleged, at the written request of the smack-owners' association.⁷² Despite this handicap, the society brought to the attention of local newspaper readers its perception of the dispute. For example, its members cited as evidence for the justness of their case, the loss, during winter gales in the North Sea in 1876, of twenty-five vessels, with all hands, out of a fleet of one hundred vessels from Yarmouth. In the same period there were seven hundred Hull and Grimsby vessels 'single boating' in the North Sea but only four were lost.⁷³

In addition to disseminating information concerning the dispute through newspapers, the members of the PHTFFPS paraded on Sundays complete with a brass band and banners through the streets, close to the fish dock, to the fishermen's church where services were held for them.⁷⁴ They also attended meetings where those sympathetic to their case addressed them. Among these were members of the Hull Trades Council, to which the PHTFFPS was affiliated and members of the temperance movements. A newspaper report of one of these meetings commented thus:

"Mrs. Autty of Wakefield, also known as 'Salvation Annie' who has been lecturing in Hull in connection with the Hull Temperance Society for the last few days, addressed the fishermen on strike at the Temperance Hall, Myton Street,..... Mrs. Autty delivered an able address to the men, in which she especially impressed upon them the great necessity there was for them at the present time, much more than any other, to practise sobriety and

temperance. She also added much instructive advice, and concluded by appealing to them to trust in God and keep themselves sober. The men listened very attentively to Mrs. Autty's remarks and gave her three cheers at the end of her address."⁷⁵

By the second week of November, some 400 men were on strike with two thirds of the port's smacks tied up. One newspaper, the *Eastern Morning News*, expressed support for the owners' case:

If, as the owners state, fish is brought into the market in a fresher and purer condition owing to the 'boxing' system then the owners are in the right, and are benefitting the public at large."⁷⁶

One week later this newspaper published a report of a visit to Yarmouth of a delegation of smack owners, the purpose of which was to assess the willingness of fishermen there to crew Hull vessels in 'boxing' fleets. The leader of the delegation claimed that not only were these men willing to break the strike in Hull but that they would cost less to employ, since they were paid lower wages than the fishermen in Hull and they received a smaller amount of money for their food.⁷⁷ In the same edition of the newspaper, the smack-owners were reported to have secured the services of the police in order to prevent the intimidation of those crews who wished to return to their employment under the terms laid down by the owners. It was also stated that almost 100 vessels had sailed in the past week.⁷⁸

There were those fishermen who were reluctant to support the strike and who not only refused to take part in it but volunteered the information that they approved

of the winter fleeting system since it allowed them to earn a reasonable income. *The Eastern Morning News* published a letter from a fisherman to that effect:

"The fact is, sir, that I was away 21 weeks and 4 days, and I settled on £273. 3s. 0d. My share of the earnings was £46.19s. 0d. So much for the boxing system, of which I thoroughly approve. After the misleading and untruthful statements put forth by the men, I think that I am only doing my duty to give the public the real facts of the case, and I say, in conclusion, that I stopped at sea to please myself, and to provide for my wife and family."⁷⁹

Given the economic circumstances of the majority of the men, it was not a difficult task for the employers to inveigle a growing number of them back to sea. The PHTFFPS did not grant payments to those on strike except where there was severe hardship. The society itself suffered from a lack of funds, which hampered its strike campaign and it accepted defeat on 14th December with the announcement that members should return to their occupations and attempt to obtain the best possible terms of conditions from their employers.⁸⁰ One of the strike leaders, R. Manton, observed:

"The strike lasted 12 weeks, the trade was entirely stopped, employers were met by deputations from the men, but to no purpose, and at the end of the year the strike collapsed through lack of funds and incomplete organisation. The employers did not scruple to send their vessels to sea during the strike in charge of men, who, under favourable circumstances, they would not have trusted with an old hat."⁸¹

Unlike their colleagues in Grimsby, the fishermen in Hull had to accept the terms laid down by their employers, involving, *inter alia*, the acceptance of the fleeting system

throughout the year. One factor which helps to explain the different outcomes of the two disputes was the difference in the composition of smack ownership in the two ports. In Hull there was a smaller number of owners some of whom owned quite large fleets, whereas in Grimsby there was a much larger number of owners who owned either a single vessel or, at the most, two or three vessels. These small owners were often under-capitalised and could not survive a protracted stoppage. In contrast, Hull had large fleets of smacks owned by limited companies. For example, two company fleets, each of sixty vessels were served by 6 steam cutters, each of which had cost the two companies £6,000. The boards of directors of these companies considered fleeting essential to their interests both at sea and in their on-shore economic activities. Moreover, their steam cutters, they claimed, had to be used throughout the year in order to justify the capital outlay and operating costs of what were relatively large and expensive steam vessels.

Gillett and MacMahon contended that this investment and expansion did not inevitably increase the profitability of the companies, at the expense of their fishermen-employees, but the power of the owners was increased and the fishermen felt further disadvantaged by, what appeared to be, increasingly complicated settlement arrangements.⁸² In these circumstances, the challenge offered by the Hull society met with a much more powerful response than that of the Grimsby society. The dispute in Hull demonstrated

to its members the powerlessness of their newly-formed society in a confrontation with a cohesive employers' association dominated, as it was, by the directors of a small number of large limited companies. Many of the fishermen had been on strike for eight weeks and had suffered substantial hardship and had not wrested any concessions from their employers.

Winter fleeting continued from Hull with the acquiescence of the fishermen and the PHTFFPS. In September 1882, the society sent two delegates to the Trades Union Congress, which was held in Manchester that year. One of the delegates, in an address to the congress, made a request for the Parliamentary Committee of the TUC to examine the proposals, emanating from the Board of Trade, for clauses to be inserted into a merchant shipping bill which was to be debated in parliament.⁸³ On more immediate issues, the society appeared to be reluctant to challenge the power of their employers. At a meeting of the society, held on 10th October, those members present:

".....decided to leave the question of winter fleeting over until another year, not because the men were any nearer falling in love with it, but in order to husband their strength for a final effort."⁸⁴

Events of the following year, however, precipitated another dispute between the Hull smack owners and the members of the PHTFFPS. In the March gales of 1883, over forty sailing smacks from Hull, Grimsby, Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Colchester, foundered in the North Sea with a considerable loss of life. Some two hundred and

fifty-five fishermen and apprentices, one hundred and eighty of whom were the crew-members of Hull smacks, drowned in the space of a few days.⁸⁵ Loss of life was a characteristic feature of the fishing industry. The subsequent Board of Trade inquiry into the losses of vessels and men received evidence, from the Wrecks Statistical Department of the Board, that in the period 1877 to 1882 inclusive the total number of losses of fishing vessels throughout the United Kingdom was 613, an annual average of 102 and these losses were accompanied by the loss of 1,456 fishermen and boys; an annual average of 244.⁸⁶ The report of the inquiry stated that some of the blame for the very high losses of crews and vessels was due, in part, to the decline in the efficiency of the crews. This deterioration, which was particularly marked amongst the casual hands, began soon after the enactment of the 1880 Act which had allowed apprentices to abandon their industrial employment.⁸⁷

The Times reported a relief-fund raising meeting for the dependants of the lost Hull fishermen:

"At a meeting of the Hull Smack Owners' Association held yesterday to inaugurate a relief fund for the widows and orphans of the fishermen lost in the late gales, it was stated that four more smacks had been given up as lost, making the total loss of life about 180, and of money lost to owners about £50,000. Before a single statement could be made, first one and then another of the smack-owners rose to announce his contribution until £600 had been promised, and before the meeting had closed the promises reached £900. The mayor has promised to call a meeting, and it is hoped the movement will become national. As the result of the late gales there are 60 widows and 200 orphans, for the most part destitute."⁸⁸

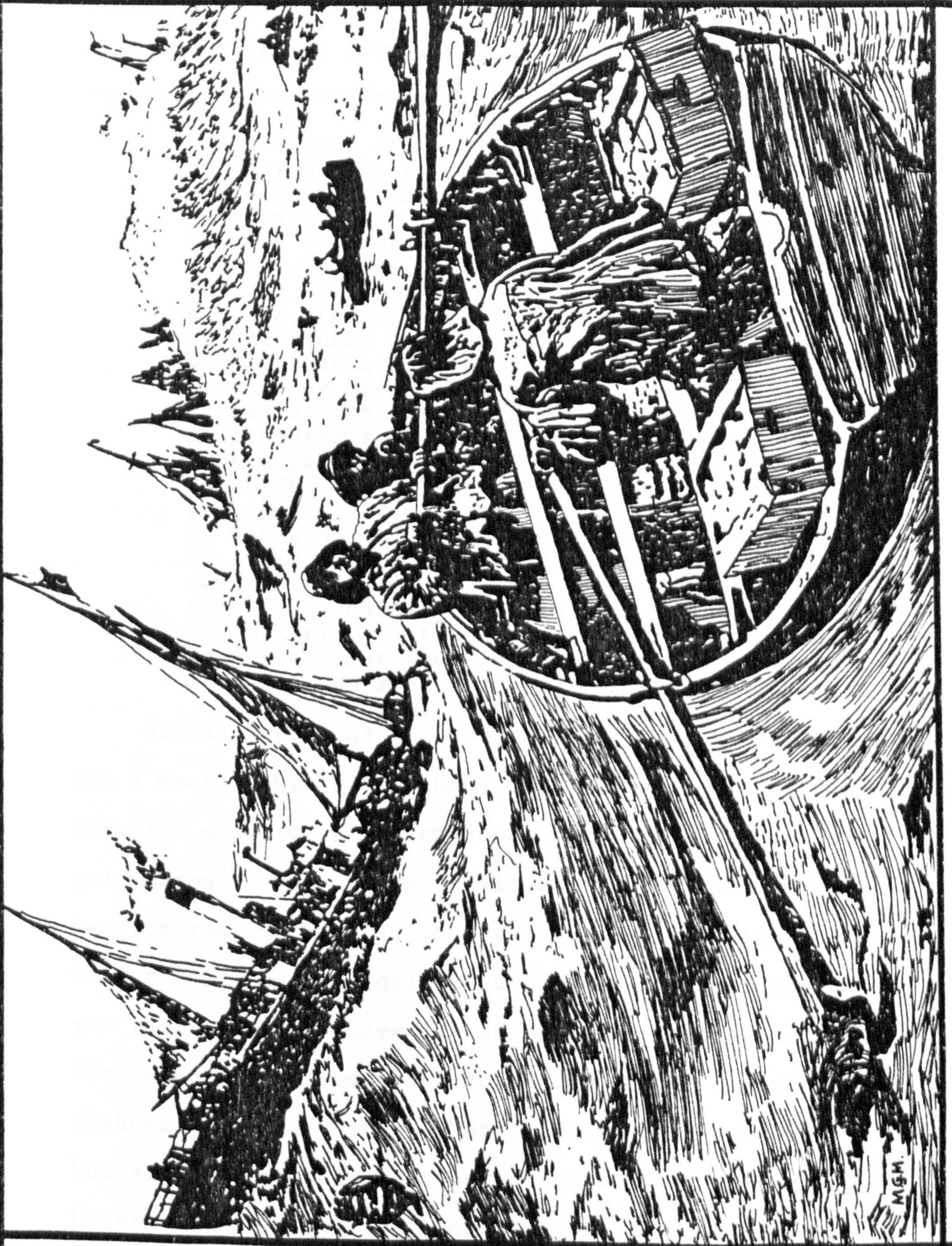
The PHTFFPS regarded the subscription of £900 as somewhat less than generous given that there were some two hundred and sixty people who were in need of relief.⁸⁹ The members of the Hull society were convinced that the major cause of the exceptionally high number of deaths of Hull fishermen and foundering of vessels, in March 1883, was the winter fleeting system. The observation was made that the Grimsby losses were much lower because they were not fleeting at the time but were, instead, engaged in single-boating voyages.⁹⁰

After a number of meetings held to discuss the issue, the Hull society resolved not to go winter fleeting again. A letter was sent, in August, to the owners' association informing its members of this decision and, in addition, the letter also gave notice that, unless the owners agreed to discontinue winter fleeting, all sailings of vessels from the port would cease on Monday, 1st October, 1883. The members of the Hull society had but one purpose in mind, that was the cessation of fleeting in winter. The owners chose to disregard the threat of a strike and continued with their preparations for the dispatch of fleets early in October. The society employed the services of the town crier, on the preceding Saturday, to inform people in the vicinity of the fish dock of the impending strike.⁹¹

In that year the society had about 800 members, the majority of whom were skippers and mates, and so they were able to keep in the dock several hundred vessels.

PLATE 7

A Contemporary Artist's Impression of the
Boxing System,
circa 1885.



Source: This is a copy of a nineteenth century drawing which featured in J. Dyson's '*Business in Great Waters*', Angus and Robertson, London, 1977, p.125.

On the first day of the strike, the *Easter Morning News* published a letter from a smack-owner which was highly critical of the society and its members:

"We are most of us plain, straightforward fishermen, who by industry and saving have managed to become smack-owners, and we think we know as much about the business as the men who are screaming so. We want to live and pay our way. We worked the single boating system till we were about ruined, and the men were continually taunting some of the owners about not being able to get steamers to bring the fish to land fresh, instead of the stinking stuff that was being landed by vessels staying away so long and sacrificing so much each voyage. Then the owners got the steamers, and the change was wonderful. The fish came day by day fresh and good. It made better prices, because it was good.....and all got the benefit by it alike. Its all fudge about cruelty and danger; fishermen - that is the proper stamp - don't know danger, and the word 'cruelty' don't apply for they are not forced to go boxing without they like. Some men now-a-days want all the money and the work put out".⁹²

Within a week of the commencement of the strike, there was a meeting between a number of owners and a delegation from the society, at which both sides voiced their grievances. The owners claimed that there would be too heavy a cost to bear if they were to abandon winter fleeting, whilst the society's delegates pointed to the dangers they and their members faced if the practice were to continue; they also complained about the large number of unemployed fishermen in the port. There was an absence of animosity but also an absence of agreement between the two groups.⁹³ Later the same day, the local Liberal MP, C.H. Wilson, speaking at a meeting of the Hull Temperance Club, said he deplored the strike of Hull fishermen:

"At the bottom of them there was really such a good feeling on the part of employers of labour and the working classes, that if only they could meet together and get more thoroughly to understand what each meant, in nineteen cases out of twenty, these strikes might be avoided."⁹⁴

Towards the end of the third week of the strike, a public meeting was held by the society. The purpose of the meeting was to bring to the notice of the public the need for the strike. The president of the Hull Trades Council expressed the sympathy of his members for the striking fishermen. One skipper, in his speech to the meeting, claimed that the fleeting was highly dangerous in winter and he asked for the sympathy of the public for the strikers.⁹⁵ Other speakers complained of the poor sea-worthiness of the smacks and that, by that reason alone, the men's lives were imperilled each time they put to sea. The *Hull News* reported one skipper making the comment:

"If the strike was a question of money he would wash his hands of it. For his part, he was satisfied with the money he got, but this was a question of life not money. One hundred and fifty lives were lost last winter and it was possible that the same thing would occur again this winter. The owners said to the men, 'You shall do it; we'll starve you to it' - but the owners would starve themselves at the same time."⁹⁶

Another speaker at this public meeting, the secretary of the Port of Grimsby Trawl Fishermen's Society, urged the men to stay on strike. He pointed out to the meeting that some three years earlier there had been a similar dispute in Grimsby over the issue of winter fleeting and

his members had been successful. The men in Hull should be as resolute as their colleagues in Grimsby and they would win. R. Manton, an executive member of the Hull society, recalled the more co-operative and harmonious relations which existed between employers and fishermen before the advent of winter fleeting. The newspaper report recorded part of his speech:

"Mr. Manton thought the fishermen were the victims of a swindle. When the boxing system was introduced, it was never intended to have it all the year round. He would do all he could to stop it, and if only the men were united they would stop it. Under this system the men were stuck out at sea like milestones (applause) and if they came home to avoid a gale they got sacked! There needed another Wilberforce to argue to abolish fleeting, for it was as bad as slavery. When the vessels came round the steamer, it was like schoolboys scrambling for apples (laughter) - and there was great danger of collision."⁹⁷

There was some intimidation of those crews who decided to ignore the strike and attempted to sail their vessels from the port. Following complaints, made by some of these fishermen, of ill-treatment from their colleagues on picket lines, a large number of smack-owners obtained interviews with the town clerk and the chief constable, at which they demanded police protection for those fishermen who sought a return to work. These owners were of the opinion that if the threats of intimidation and violence were defeated, most of the fishermen would accept the need for the winter fleeting and boxing system.⁹⁸

At a meeting of the Hull Trades Council on 18th October, the delegates also voiced their concern at the reports of

intimidation and violence. Manton and his colleagues claimed that such accounts were exaggerated, but there was some substance in these reports since four fishermen had been prosecuted and gaoled for acts of violence against other fishermen when they, the latter, attempted to cross the picket line and board their vessels. W.H. Ashford, a prominent member of the Hull society, who was present at the Trades Council meeting, claimed that his members were innocent of these allegations and were always conscious of the need to behave with propriety. The blame was to be laid with others.

"Mr. Ashford assured the Council that his society had taken every precaution to prevent anything of that sort, but that there were a large number of weekly and casual hands that were out of the reach of their influence and control, and it was amongst these that the disturbances occurred. They had done what they could to keep them quiet but had not been successful."⁹⁹

Ashford's statement must have quelled the misgivings of the delegates to the Trades Council, since they proceeded to give their unanimous support to the Hull society and its strike action. Despite Ashford's deprecation of the behaviour of the weekly hands, the evidence, if somewhat fragmentary, does suggest that they supported the strike even although they were not members of the PHTFFPS.¹⁰⁰ They had no trade union to co-ordinate their activities on the picket line and elsewhere, so it was almost inevitable that, because of the lack of organisation,

some of their number behaved in an undisciplined way. Members of the Hull society urged these fishermen, who had taken the place of the apprentices in the Hull vessels, to form their own trade union but this advice was to be ignored for some years.

It was not only weekly hands who were brought before the local magistrates, accused of intimidation and disturbing the peace. James Carrick, president of the Hull society, and three fellow-members were arrested following a disturbance near the fish dock. The case, after a hearing which lasted two days, was dismissed and immediately afterwards there was a triumphal procession through the city.¹⁰¹ This, however, was one of the few victories the striking fishermen were to enjoy during the stoppage. A number of smacks had managed to sail since the police had provided their crews with safe passage to the fish dock. This trickling away of vessels to the fishing grounds was reminiscent of the strike in 1880 and was to become a characteristic feature of future stoppages, in the rest of the nineteenth century, and throughout the twentieth century.

After five weeks the strike ended, in the middle of November, with the defeat of the strikers. At a meeting of the delegates from the two organisations, under the mediation of the president of the Hull Trades Council, the men said that they would return to sea on the basis of single boating voyages. However, the owners would not agree to this demand and instead offered to allow

the society to participate in the selection of the admirals of the fleets; they also agreed to the society's proposal that there should be no more than fifty vessels in a fleet. These concessions made by the smack-owners were accepted by the society but they were not put into practice since the owners were later to claim that the choice of admirals was a matter for the steam carrier companies and that it was not practicable to reduce the size of the fleets.¹⁰²

At the start of the dispute, the strike committee decided that the society, with funds of £450, could not afford to subsidise its members; nonetheless there were so many reported cases of hardship that the society agreed to award payments to some members. These payments amounted to approximately £584 but the society had received donations from other trade unions. In addition to the financial burdens, the society claimed that three members of the strike committee, all of whom were highly experienced skippers, were refused command of their vessels following the end of the stoppage and, instead, had to sail as second hands on other vessels.¹⁰³

Winter fleeting was to continue for the Hull vessels for another twenty years and the practice was not to face co-ordinated challenge again from the Hull society, or other trade unions. Despite its failure to force a change of mind on the issue amongst the smack-owners, the society did not suffer a serious diminution in membership. In 1884, the society acquired a clubhouse,

near the fish dock, at a cost of £1,500. A loan, repayable over ten years, was obtained from a Hull bank.¹⁰⁴ It would appear that the society was favourably regarded by town councillors, some smack-owners and clergymen, since all were represented at the opening of the club. One councillor urged the members of the society to work harmoniously with their employers, to avoid dissension because this only brought disaster upon employers and workers. In this way, they could set a good example for the other trade unions in the town. The Reverend W.R. Welch praised the sobriety of the society's members and their adherence to the temperance movement. Councillor Ansell, who owned twenty smacks, urged the members to be careful in their selection of crews; they should also ensure that they always gave preference of employment to teetotallers. R. Manton, who thanked the guest speakers on behalf of the society, said that of the 41 members of the society's executive committee, 30 were temperance men and of the 700 members of the society, 300 were total abstainers.¹⁰⁵

In contrast with the Hull fishermen, fishermen in Grimsby continued their opposition to the practice of winter fleeting. In 1885, however, the Grimsby society called its men out on strike when a trawler company, which owned fifty smacks, acquired five steam carriers and attempted to resume winter fleeting. The strike which was confined to the one company lasted for two months before the directors of the company conceded the dispute to their employees.¹⁰⁶ The Grimsby

society supported the strike on the grounds that the practice was more dangerous than single boating, and that the evidence for this view was to be found in larger losses of life sustained by the Hull fishermen, in the March gales of 1883, when they were fleeing and the Grimsby fishermen were single boating.

Towards the end of 1886 the Grimsby smack-owners attempted to change the system of remuneration for the weekly hands from weekly wages to a system of poundage (or shares). The proposal, which was designed to reduce the earnings of these men, met with a hostile response since they preferred to be paid by a weekly wage. The members of the Grimsby society, who by this time numbered more than 1,000, were unwilling to give any assistance to the weekly hands, even although they were not immune from the threat of a reduction of earnings.¹⁰⁷ The weekly hands, who were not organised into a trade union, expressed their opposition to the proposed change at a number of public meetings. The *Hull News* commented on the mood of one of these meetings:

".....from the attitude taken up by the men it is feared that strong opposition will be experienced, and there are even probabilities of a strike being initiated. Two or three speeches, couched in the rough but forcible terms for which the fishermen's utterances are noted, were delivered by some of the more prominent men to their comrades, upon the Fish Dock yesterday, the proposed innovation being strongly denounced. The vast majority of the men are very reluctant to change from the present wages, as although these are not high, they recognise the fact that, from the quarter from which it has originated, the alteration must necessarily entail a reduction."¹⁰⁸

In the event, the change in remuneration was not enforced but the reluctance of the Grimsby society to become involved in the conflict was noted by the smack-owners and those in charge of the new steam trawler companies. Within a year winter fleetings was resumed by the Grimsby vessels and this decision by the owners met with no challenge from the Grimsby society. By this time the adoption of the steam trawlers was causing consternation and disarray amongst members of the Grimsby and Hull societies as well as amongst the owners of sailing vessels. Both societies had for some years, as the author has discussed in Chapter 4, voiced their disquiet anent the increasing numbers of steam trawlers. W.H. Ashford, secretary of the Hull society, in a speech he made at the Trades Union Congress in Hull in 1886, claimed that the steam trawlers were ruining the industry.¹⁰⁹ The trade unions, however, were as powerless as the smaller smack-owners to prevent the growth of steam trawler companies. Nor could they determine the system of employment under which their members were hired. This was entirely the prerogative of the employers, who could, with the assistance rendered by the Merchant Shipping Acts, employ fishermen on a casual basis but, at the same time, subject their employees to a constraining and binding employment contract.

REFERENCES

1. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* p.29.
2. K.D. Buckley, *Trade Unionism in Aberdeen 1878 to 1900*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1955, pp.51-52.
3. Contemporary observers, who commented upon the activities of trade unionists in the fishing industry at the beginning of the twentieth century, appeared to ignore earlier developments in trade unionism amongst fishermen, for example, see F.G. Aflalo, *op.cit.*, pp.244-250.
4. J. Rule, *op.cit.*: pp.61.62.
5. Trade unionism rarely attracted adherents in the smaller, traditional fishing communities where ownership and the division of labour was, and remains, more diffuse in character.
6. *Crew Lists and Agreements for Aberdeen trawler Admiral*, dated 31.12.1886, File No. BT3/361/1 and 2, Scottish Record Office, Charlotte Square, Edinburgh.
7. *Grimsby News*, 12th March, 1879.
8. Friendly societies were created with the object of paying 'friendly benefits' or 'provident benefits' to their members in repayment for contributions which were normally paid on a weekly basis. These friendly benefits took the form of sickness and accident benefits, death benefit and funeral benefit; less widespread benefits were tool benefit, marriage dowry, unemployment benefit and the provision of convalescent homes. See A. Marsh, *op.cit.*, p.120.
9. *Register of Friendly Societies File (FS/4)*, Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh.
10. *ibid.* FS 4/872.
11. Until 1971, trade unions had to seek registration, under the terms of the *Trade Union Act 1871* and the *Trade Union Act 1913*.
12. As recently as 1970 these benefits represented some 16 per cent of the total expenditure per trade union member. This figure had declined to approximately 13 per cent in 1976. Friendly benefits, as they are known, have diminished over a long period of time in all of the British trade unions. A. Marsh, *Concise Encyclopaedia of Industrial Relations*, Gower Press, Farnborough, 1979, p.120.

13. *Port of Hull Trawl Fishermen's Friendly Protection Society Rule Book, Webb Trade Union Collection, Transport Workers and General Labourers' Section, Section C, Vol.90, Item VII, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London School of Economics and Political Science, Portugal Street, London.*
14. *ibid.* p.10
15. *ibid.* pp.14-15.
16. R. Manton, "*The Fishermen*", *Journal of the National Federation of Fishermen, Vol.1, No.1, March, 1891, p.7, Webb Collection, Section B, Vol.CVI, Item 54.*
17. Earlier attempts to form a trade union for fishermen in Grimsby had met with little success. The Port of Grimsby Trawl Fishermen's Protective Society, which was created in January 1873, was dissolved in May 1874. File F/S7/3/81, Public Record Office, Kew, Richmond, Surrey.
18. R. Manton, *op.cit.* p.7.
19. *Eastern Morning News, Wednesday, October 27th, 1880.*
20. E. Gillett, *op.cit.* p.247.
21. The penal sanctions codified in the *Merchant Shipping Act, 1854*, illustrate the active and biased intervention of the state in employment practices and relationships in the industry
22. E. Gillett, *op.cit.* p.252.
23. *Eastern Morning News, Friday, October 19th, 1880.*
24. E. Gillett and K.A. MacMahon, *op.cit.*, p.310.
25. Gillett and MacMahon argue, in their book, that the Grimsby magistrates were corrupt and that they were aided in their work by servile clerks.
ibid. pp.310-314.
26. *Grimsby News, 7th July, 1882.*
27. A Union was a workhouse, financially supported and administered by a number of parishes, which were united for the administration of poor relief.
28. *Grimsby Observer, 1st July, 1878.*
29. Quoted in D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.82.

30. *The Eastern Morning News*, editions of 3rd, 5th and 6th May, 1882, and 4th, 17th, 25th and 26th August, 1882, provide reports of the murder trials. Both the accused were found guilty and executed in the same year. One was hanged in Armley Gaol, Leeds, and the other at York.
31. *Grimsby News*, 8th September, 1882.
32. *Report of the Board of Trade Inquiry into the Relations between the Owners, Masters and Crews of Fishing Vessels*, C.3432, London, 1883, p.i, British Parliamentary Papers, Microfilm Copy in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.
33. E. Gillett, *op.cit.* p.262.
34. *ibid.* pp.262-263. V.L. Allen, Professor of Sociology at Leeds University, has suggested that governments rarely appoint to committees of inquiry, those of a radical, independent perspective since such individuals may, in the course of their deliberations and in their subsequent reports cause some embarrassment to cabinet ministers and senior state officials. V.L. Allen, *The Sociology of Industrial Relations*, Longman, 1971, p.226.
35. Members of the Committee did, however, visit other English ports, e.g. North Shields, Scarborough, Yarmouth, and Lowestoft. They did not deem it necessary to visit the Scottish ports. *Report of Board of Trade Inquiry*, p.iii.
36. *Minutes of Evidence, Report of Board of Trade Inquiry*, p.12.
37. *Minutes of Evidence*, Q.1308, p.32 and Q,1342, p.35.
38. *ibid.* Q.1375, p.35.
39. *Report of the Sixteenth Annual Trades Union Congress at Nottingham*, September, 1883, p.22.
40. *ibid.* p.23.
41. *Minutes of Evidence, Board of Trade Inquiry*, p.40.
42. *ibid.* pp.29-30.
43. *ibid.* p.24.
44. *Introduction to the Board of Trade Inquiry*, p.x.
45. *ibid.* p.xi. A superintendent of Mercantile Marine was a Board of Trade official stationed in a port.
46. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* p.114.

47. Section 28(4) of the *Merchant Shipping Act (Fishing Boats) 1883*.
48. Section 33 of the *Merchant Shipping Act (Fishing Boats) 1883*.
49. Section 32 of the *Merchant Shipping Act (Fishing Boats) 1883*.
50. *Grimsby News*, 24th May, 1895, reported a court case of a smack-skipper being fined five pounds, with the alternative of one month's imprisonment with hard labour, for the unprovoked assault of an apprentice on board a vessel at sea. Cruel treatment was not confined to the apprentices on board the smacks as the following quotation, taken from a newspaper report of a preliminary court hearing shows:

"Benjamin Baggott, a Grimsby skipper, was at Grimsby committed for trial, charged with setting fire to a negro named Roberts, one of the crew of the *Cypress*, of which defendant was skipper. After, it is alleged, continually assaulting the negro, accused poured turpentine over him, and ignited the saturated guernsey the man was wearing. The crew saved the negro, who was four months under hospital treatment, having been burned through the whole thickness of his skin.
Daily Free Press, 13th April, 1900.
51. *Grimsby Express*, 28th February, 1889, contains an account of a court case in which two apprentices, aged 16 years, were convicted of throwing thirty fathoms of warp into the sea. Both apprentices were sentenced to three months' imprisonment, with hard labour.
52. *Fishing Trades Gazette*, 18th January, 1890.
53. See MacMahon and Gillett, *op.cit.* pp.302-322 and E. Gillett, *op.cit.* pp.225-235.
54. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* pp.141.
55. *ibid.* p.142.
56. *Report of the Board of Trade Inquiry, 1883*, para.19, p.viii.
57. *Minutes of Evidence, Report of the Royal Commission on Sea Fisheries, 1863*, pp.168-169.

58. D. Boswell, *op.cit.* pp.115-123.
59. *Eastern Morning News*, 3rd December, 1880. This newspaper report gives a precise definition of the boxing system of transporting the fish from the smack to the steam cutter, which then took the combined catch of the fleet to a fishing port or Billingsgate Market in London. 'Spurn' is Spurn Point, a noted landmark, which is situated on the northern bank at the mouth of the River Humber.
60. *Grimsby Observer*, 11th, 18th September, 1878, and 10th September, 1879.
61. *ibid.* 25th August and 1st September, 1880.
62. *Times* 24th September, 1880.
63. *The Fishermen*, Vol.1, No.2, April 1891, Webb Collection, Section B, Vol.CVI, Item No.54.
64. *Eastern Morning News*, 20th October, 1880.
65. *ibid.*
66. *The Fishermen*, *op.cit.* p.6.
67. *ibid.* p.8.
68. P. Beharrell and G. Philo (ed.), '*Trade Unions and the Media*', Macmillan, London, 1977, pp.1-22.
69. Gaventa, in his study of coal-miners and their employers in the Appalachian Mountains, America, quotes the findings of a survey which show that since the end of the 1939-45 War, there have been over 10,000 studies carried out into the mass media and the dissemination of information to the public. *Op.cit.* p.217.
70. M. Lipsky, *Protest in City Politics*, Rand-McNally, Chicago, 1970, p.169.
71. Y. Kapp, '*Eleanor Marx: The Crowded Years 1884-1895*', Vol.II, Vigaro, London, 1979, pp.364-380.

72. *Eastern Morning News*, 22nd October, 1880.
73. *Eastern Morning News*, 23rd October, 1880.
74. *Eastern Morning News*, 24th October, 1880.
75. *Eastern Morning News*, 28th October, 1880.
76. *Eastern Morning News*, 8th November, 1880.
77. *Eastern Morning News*, 15th November, 1880.
78. *Eastern Morning News*, 15th November, 1880.
79. *Eastern Morning News*, 23rd November, 1880.
80. *Eastern Morning News*, 15th December, 1880.
81. R. Manton, *The Fishermen*, op.cit. p.6. Manton in this report increases the duration of the strike; however, it lasted for eight weeks and not, as he suggests, twelve weeks.
82. E. Gillett and K.A. MacMahon, op.cit. p.315.
83. *Annual Report of the Trades Union Congress for the Year 1882*, Manchester, p.39. Membership of the PHTFFPS was 539.
84. *The Fishermen*, Vol.1 No.3, Webb Collection, p.6.
85. *Eastern Morning News*, 29th March, 1883.
86. *Report of the Board of Trade Inquiry on the System of Deep Sea Trawl Fishing in the North Sea, 1883*, p.8, British Parliamentary Papers. The inquiry which was held at the Town Hall, Hull, in June, 1883, was conducted by a stipendary magistrate with two merchant navy captains acting as nautical assessors.
87. *ibid.* p.10.

88. *Times*, 29th March, 1883.
89. *The Fishermen*, Vol.1 No.4, June, 1891, p.7.
90. *ibid.* p.7.
91. *Eastern Morning News*, 1st October, 1883.
92. *ibid.*
93. *Eastern Morning News*, 6th October, 1883.
94. *Hull News*, 6th October, 1883.
95. *Hull News*, 20th October, 1883.
96. *ibid.*
97. *ibid.* Manton's reference is to the English politician, William Wilberforce, MP, (1759-1833) who played a major part in securing the abolition of slavery in 1807 and of slavery itself in the British Empire in 1833. Wilberforce lived in a house close to the Hull docks. The house is now a museum.
98. *Eastern Morning News*, 18th October, 1883.
99. *Hull News*, 20th October, 1882.
100. *The Fishermen*, Vol.1, No.4, June, 1891, p.7.
101. *Eastern Morning News*, 24th November, 1883.
102. *The Fishermen*, *ibid.* p.7.
103. *ibid.* p.8.
104. *Hull News*, 18th October, 1884.
105. *ibid.*

106. *Grimsby Observer*, 6th January, 1886.
107. *Hull News*, 4th December, 1886.
108. *Hull News*, 1st January, 1887.
109. *Annual Report of the Trade Union Congress for the Year 1886*,
Hull, p.45.

CHAPTER 6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE UNIONISM IN THE MAJOR FISHING PORTS

C H A P T E R 6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE UNIONISM
IN THE MAJOR FISHING PORTS

Industrial conflict became an increasingly widespread phenomenon in Great Britain in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The Webbs recorded the number of industrial disputes reported in the *Times* between 1876 and 1889 and this record revealed a fourfold increase in 1889 over the average of the preceding five years.¹ Amongst those workers involved in these disputes were the members of established trade unions, e.g. engineers, printers and builders, and members of what became known as the new trade unions, many of which were formed to organise semi-skilled and unskilled workers, e.g. factory workers, seamen and dockers. Some 800,000 people joined TUC affiliated trade unions between 1887 and 1892. During this period the first successful efforts were made to create trade unions for the unskilled, to recruit women into the trade unions, and campaigns were conducted, in numerous industries, for improvements in the terms and conditions of employment of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers.²

In common with numerous other industries, the British fishing industry experienced a growth of trade unionism in the late nineteenth century, even although it was always to remain largely absent in the smaller fishing communities. These trade unions that emerged in this period were different in some respects from other 'new' trade unions. They were,

for example, more conservative in administrative terms, they were not so closely linked to socialist ideology and they were not able to recruit the majority of fishermen in Britain. The overwhelming majority of their members were employed by the sailing trawler companies and then later by the steam trawler companies in the larger fishing ports of Aberdeen, Granton, North Shields, Hull, Grimsby, Fleetwood, and Milford Haven.

Considerable migration of fishermen to the larger fishing ports took place in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The *Daily Free Press* conducted a survey on the migration of fishermen and the depopulation of small fishing villages on the Aberdeenshire coast in the eighteen nineties, and it found that many of these fishermen migrated to Aberdeen, where they found employment in the trawler companies, or worked as labourers in other industries:

"The houses in the little village of Newtonhill, once occupied by able-bodied fishermen, are gradually becoming empty and, as one aged resident pathetically remarked - 'Ye dinna think sae much o't in the day time, but when the nicht comes doon it's sad to see ilka ither hoose without a spark o' licht in the window'. It may be noted, however, that although the fishing population of Newtonhill is fast disappearing, the locality is becoming rather popular as a resort for visitors. In the summer months, in particular, the houses are pretty fully occupied; but never again is skaterow likely to regain a shadow of its former importance as a centre for the production of those fine smoked haddocks for which it was - like all the other Kincardineshire villages - famous for many years."3

These large fishing centres, particularly those of Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull, created regionally based working class communities and these communities intermingled with others that were increasingly receptive to the growth of trade unionism. In 1888 a trade union for fishermen was created, with a branch in Aberdeen and one in South Shields, namely the Amalgamated Society of East Coast Fishermen and in 1889 it had 150 members in Aberdeen and 120 in South Shields.⁴ Small trade unions were formed in other ports and in 1890 they, with the Hull society, and the Grimsby society, formed the National Federation of Fishermen of Great Britain and Ireland.⁵ The rules of the union were drawn up by an executive committee which was drawn almost exclusively from the Hull society and the Grimsby society.⁶

Branches of this national union of fishermen were established in Aberdeen, Leith, South Shields, Hull, Grimsby, Boston, Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Ramsgate. Early in 1891 membership numbered in excess of 4,000 but as R. Manton, the newly elected general secretary and a former member of the executive committee of the PHTFFPS, observed this was a minute proportion of the total number of fishermen in the United Kingdom at that time (he estimated that there were then approximately 140,000 fishermen).⁷ At the Trades Union Congress of 1891, which was held in Newcastle, the National Federation of Fishermen was represented by seven delegates, six of whom had been active in the PHTFFPS and the GTFPS.⁸ This delegation was to

prove to be the largest ever to represent fishermen at the TUC. The dominance of the Humber ports delegates reflected on both their trade union experience and, more importantly, the fact that the combined Hull and Grimsby proportion of the total membership was in the region of ninety per cent. Grimsby had the largest number of members with some 2,400, then Hull came second with 2,200 members, Aberdeen had one of the smallest membership with 168.⁹ A resolution, moved by the NFF delegates, which demanded Board of Trade certification for all of those in command of fishing vessels of whatever type, over twenty-five registered tonnage, was carried unanimously by the congress.¹⁰

Approaches made by branches of the NFF to port employers' associations were diffident in character. This is evidenced in reports submitted to the head office in Grimsby. For example, a report from the Hull branch in 1891 contained the following passage:

"We have had an interview with the Smack Owners, who received us very courteously. We are now arranging about meeting all the Smack and Steam Trawler Owners. Although it will be a difficult matter to arrange a deputation of sea-going fishermen, we shall endeavour to do our best toward meeting the wishes of employers, consistent with our own dignity as Trade Unionists."¹¹

Recruitment of fishermen of all ranks was considered the major initial aim of the federation. Its leaders continued with their criticism of winter fleeting but despite the fact that this practice was largely confined to Hull and Grimsby, where the NFF had a substantial membership,

no determined effort was made to bring about its abolition. Instead, it was subjected to a muted form of criticism. In the April, 1891, issue of *The Fishermen* the following critical comment was made:

"None but those who have had to risk the perils of the North Sea, during the winter months in a box fleet, can have any idea of the monotony, the ever-lasting sameness and the dangers (for which familiarity too often breeds contempt) incurred by those fishermen who have Hobson's Choice, which is the box fleet or starve. Now, it must not be thought that we advocate the abolition of fleeting, such is not our intention."¹²

It would appear that the NFF was deeply critical of the then National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, which was formed in 1881 to bring spiritual comfort to the fishermen whilst they went about their work in the fleets. Mission smacks sailed to the fishing grounds providing basic medical facilities, spiritual aid, woollen garments, books, and cheap tobacco.¹³ In this work, the missionaries sought to defeat the activities of the English, Dutch and German 'copers' or 'coopers' who sold, from their vessels, which were often smacks, spirits, beer, tobacco and even pornographic material to the fishermen:¹⁴

"The MDSF has informed the British public many a time, and often, that it found the toilers of the deep in a terribly depraved condition, that in all probability if it had not been for their endeavours, and the sympathy strewn along their path by a trusting public, that the fishermen would have been in the same condition as they were years ago when the MDSF found them helpless, drifting upon the rocks of destruction and but for them and their Mission, irretrievably lost."¹⁵

The NFF claimed that much more had been achieved by the fishermen of Hull and Grimsby by trade union action, than had obtained through the work of the mission. A more specific criticism of the mission was that it would not allow members of the federation to hold trade union meetings on board mission smacks. Another criticism was that the mission failed to provide its own crews with reasonable terms and conditions of employment. For example, crews were signed off ship's articles as soon as they returned to port and they were not given concise settlement sheets.¹⁶ Another source of grievance was the existence of inequalities on board the mission smacks:

"There is a great contrast between the food the Mission ships are provided with, and what is provided for the Pastor in the after cabin. If you want to make a favourable impression on 'Jack' sit down to dinner with him. It will not tend to bring you nearer to him for him to know you, who profess to love him and are denying yourself for his sake, are fed on fresh meat, ham and eggs in the cabin, while he has salt horse, canned beef, and peels his own potatoes after being cooked.Thousands of our fishermen in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales are unemployed and starving, help us give them work, help us in the way we wish helping, or stand aside, and do not parade before the public the fact that you are the fishermen's friend."¹⁷

In contrast with this criticism, numerous contemporary observers and marine historians have claimed that the NMDSF (now the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen) provided useful medical assistance and, at a different level, helped to break the monotony of fleeting by supplying the fishermen with tobacco, non-alcoholic drinks and literature of a different kind than that purveyed by the copers.¹⁸

Where the employers were concerned, the NFF was to prove that it was as powerless as the societies it replaced when it attempted to improve the conditions of its members. In 1892, after attempting to negotiate an increase in wages over a period of nine months, two hundred Grimsby 'cod-men' (employed on liners) withdrew their labour but the stoppage was only a minor hindrance to the employers who were able to crew the vessels with other Grimsby fishermen and fishermen recruited from other ports. After three weeks the men admitted defeat and sought to return to work but only a minority were re-employed by their employers.¹⁹

At the Trades Union Congress in 1892, which was held in Glasgow, the NFF delegation successfully moved a resolution which sought more thorough surveillance of the trawler owners' mutual insurance schemes which allowed owners to insure vessels, which the NFF delegates claimed were, in some instances, unseaworthy, for fifty per cent more than their marketable value. The federation's proposals sought a more rigorous system of inspection of vessels by Board of Trade personnel. Only in this way could members of crews be confident that they were sailing in seaworthy and properly-equipped vessels.²⁰

An indication of the growing importance of the trade union movement in Britain by 1892 can be seen in an editorial in the *Glasgow Herald* published on the second day of the proceedings of the TUC:

"No change in our industrial economy is more remarkable than the change of public sentiment towards organisations of industrial workers.sixteen years ago the Trade Unions of the United Kingdom held their Annual Conference here, and their presence was ignored by the community. This week the delegates of the same Unions are the honoured guests of the Corporation, and their proceedings are attracting the interests of all sections of the citizens. Indeed, it is hardly too much to say that the eyes of the country are upon the present Congress, for never did Labour questions possess such social and political importance as they do now. It is just possible that the disposition of the day is rather to exaggerate the importance of Labour, both as an economic and political factor."²¹

Whatever observations may be made concerning the attitudes and behaviour of the directors of the growing number of steam trawler companies, they appeared not to exaggerate the power of the fishermen's trade unions. Despite the hostility of many members of the NFF towards the steam trawlers, the replacement of the sailing trawlers by the technologically new vessels was not subjected to serious challenge by the crews. There was at this time a growing surplus of labour and this labour surplus, combined with powerless, fragmented trade unionism amongst a heterogeneous labour force, ensured a near trouble-free passage for the early steam trawler companies.²²

After less than four years of existence, the NFF was dissolved in May 1894.²³ From its inception, there had been dissent and conflict between the branches in the major ports and there were those fishermen who believed a national union of fishermen to be inappropriate to their localised interests.²⁴ In addition, the NFF experienced

major difficulties in the recruitment of weekly hands who were somewhat indifferent to trade unionism.²⁵ This indifference amongst share fishermen and the weekly hands was caused, in part, by the failure of the trade unions to bring about changes in the conditions of employment of fishermen. The most notable failure was the refusal to challenge the practice of winter fleeting and the box system.

The steam trawlers, however, required engineers as essential crew-members of their vessels and these men were more receptive to the development of trade unionism in the industry. Some of the engineers, recruited by the steam trawler companies, had had experience of trade union membership in other industries and were anxious to maintain this form of collective approach to industrial relations. In Grimsby, for example, the Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels' Engineers' and Firemen's Union was formed in October, 1896.²⁶ Some two years later, a similar trade union was created in Hull which was given the name: Humber Amalgamated Steam Trawler Engineers and Firemen's Union and at a meeting of the Aberdeen Trades Council on 13th December 1899, the delegates were informed by the secretary that a new trade union, the Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessels', Enginemen's and Firemen's Union had been established at the beginning of the month and 150 men had applied for membership.²⁷ Within a short space of time, trade unions for engine-room staff were established in Milford Haven and Fleetwood.

On 31st December, 1897, the Grimsby engineers' union

produced its second report and balance sheet, in which the secretary, J. Collins, made the following observations:

"I am glad to be able to say that our labours in the cause of Trade Unionism have been awarded with a fair amount of success.we are now a body of some 500 men combined together for mutual protection, our aim being to assist each other in times of adversity and to do all in our power to maintain our just rights and liberties as working men. I hope this statement will not be misconstrued by any of you into a declaration of hostility on our part. I may add, I believe that you are as sincere as I am myself in expressing the wish that the amicable relationships at present existing between the employers and ourselves may long continue, our idea being defence, not defiance."²⁸

Formal negotiation rights were obtained with little delay or resistance offered by the employers. One reason for the willingness of the employers to concede these rights was that the engineers, unlike the rest of the sea-going labour force, possessed scarce, and hence, marketable skills. An example of an early, formalised agreement between an association of employers and one of the engineers' trade unions is provided in Appendix 4, p.586, "Agreement between the Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association and the Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union, dated 27th November, 1899."²⁹

Whilst it would appear that the trade unions, representing the engineers and firemen, were anxious to maintain amicable relations with the employers they were, at the same time, willing to take issue with the latter over terms and conditions of employment, even if such

action involved a withdrawal of their labour. In Aberdeen, for example, in May 1900, the engineers' and firemen's union took exception to a number of rules introduced, without consultation, by the vessel owners' association. One of these rules meant that firemen had to perform certain duties on the deck alongside the deckhands, e.g. operate the winch during the shooting and hauling of the gear. Another rule, or 'by law' as they were known, gave the owners the right to retain two days' wages of all weekly paid employees as 'lie money'; in the event of anyone failing to give twenty-four hours notice of intention to terminate his engagement this money would be forfeited to the company.³⁰

A large majority of the four hundred members of the union voted in favour of a stoppage until the by laws were revoked by the employers' association. The deckhands and cooks agreed to support the strike even although they were not members of a trade union.³¹ For their part, these unorganised workers demanded that in addition to the abolition of the 'lie money' rule and the 'penny-a-day fund', their weekly wage (for a seven-day working week) should be raised from five shillings per week to six shillings and that they should be given five shillings per one hundred pounds of the catch sale figure.³²

The Aberdeen engineers, who were paid a weekly wage and were hostile to the share system of payment, were, of course, members of a trade union and the strike meetings they attended bore the trade union hallmarks of comprehensive organisation of activities, disciplined conduct and

orderly meetings with regulations governing both procedure and debate.³³ In contrast to this orderliness, the deckhands and cooks held disorganised and rowdy public meetings close to the fish-market. Local newspapers, in their reports of the dispute, compared the behaviour of the two groups of employees and provided their readers with a somewhat unfavourable view of those outwith the trade union:

"The deckhands and cooks today held a meeting at the Inches. A waggon was used as a platform from which to address the crowd. Two self-appointed chairmen were shouted down by the crowd and numerous others attempted to address the crowd at the same time. A man of small stature began to harangue the crowd. He was cut short and told, "To coom down off tha', you'se only a cook". He retaliated by saying that he was ready to meet any man in the crowd after the meeting, but he eventually got off the platform."³⁴

William Johnston, the secretary of the Aberdeen Trades Council, advised the deckhands and cooks to form a trade union in order to better protect their interests.³⁵ This advice was followed by the majority of these men, some of whom sent an invitation to the secretary of the PHTFFPS, which had been revived following the dissolution of the NFF in 1894, to assist with the task of creating a trade union.³⁶ The invitation was accepted and an Aberdeen branch of the PHTFFPS was formed with some two hundred members. Thirteen years later it still bore this title (see Appendix 5 p.588, Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessels Owners' Association Document . . . Concerning the Scale of Payments and Conditions of Employment). In contrast with the position of the

newly-formed trade union, the Aberdeen engineers' union reported to the local newspapers that it was in a sound financial condition and that it had sufficient funds to continue the strike for several more weeks.³⁷

For their part, the employers did not stand idly by. William Pyper, President of the Aberdeen Steam Trawler Owners' Association claimed that some concessions had been made to the engineers concerning the kind and amount of work the latter would have to perform on the deck, and that slight pay increases would be given if the men, who, the employers argued, were better paid than the men in Grimsby and Hull, returned to work.³⁸ In addition to these conciliatory gestures, however, the owners were able, from the onset of the dispute, to send vessels to sea with either non-union labour that was recruited locally or from Milford Haven and North Shields.³⁹ The employers also received offers of assistance from the Hull trawler owners' association which, in a letter to Pyper, offered the services of some five hundred Hull trawlermen in order to break the strike in Aberdeen.⁴⁰ There were those trawler owners in Aberdeen, with one or two vessels, who quickly obtained a settlement with the engineers' union and their vessels, four in number, were able to sail with the union's approval.⁴¹ Many more, however, sailed with strike-breaking crews.

The Aberdeen engineers also appealed to their counterparts in Grimsby and Hull for assistance and both trade

unions stated in reply that they would do their utmost to prevent the recruitment of crews, in the two ports, for service on Aberdeen vessels.⁴² Despite this support and the public declarations of the Aberdeen engineers that they would not return to sea until all of their demands had been met, the ranks of striking fishermen suffered an increasing depletion, as more and more men returned to work under the *status quo ante*, and there was in consequence a sudden termination of the strike with the announcement made by the executive of the engineers' union that the members should go back to work upon the best terms they could obtain from their individual employers.⁴³

Before attempting to draw any conclusions from the dispute and assessing its relevance for contemporary events and circumstances, it may be of some assistance to examine a dispute in the Grimsby fishing industry which occurred in the following year, 1901, and in which a major part was taken by the then recently formed Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union.

In Grimsby in 1901, there were just 61 sailing smacks and some 471 steam trawlers.⁴⁴ Only the skippers and mates of the latter were paid on the share-system, the rest of the crews, i.e. the majority of the sea-going employees of the trawler companies, were paid by weekly wages. Some years earlier, five of the owners had sought to abolish the share system and replace it with payment by wages for all crew members. By 1901, however, a majority of the employers

were of the opinion that their interests would be better served by a payments system within which weekly wages were supplemented by a small percentage share of proceeds of the catch, their argument being that this system would provide the crews with an incentive to work harder and more efficiently. The owners were highly critical of the attitudes and work performance of many of the crews. A newspaper report described the employers' position:

"The owners complain of the absolutely wanton waste, the lack of enthusiasm, and in some cases the incompetence of the men. There are bitter complaints that the crews are callously indifferent to the result of the voyage, that the engineers allow the steam to fall when the trawl is down and are ready to accept a tow rope in preference to doing any little repairs when a hitch occurs.⁴⁵

A letter from J. Nesbit, Secretary to the Grimsby Federated Owners Protection Society, outlining the reasons for the employers' decision, was published in the same paper:

"The earnings of the vessels are certainly not by any means what they ought to be, considering the money that is spent on their equipment. The owners therefore propose that in future every member of the crew shall be given a direct interest in the catch. He shall be supplied with good food when at sea by the owner as heretofore, he shall be paid a weekly wage which he will receive whether the vessel pays or not, and in addition, he shall be paid accordingly to scale, so much in the £ on the earnings of the vessel less the usual settling expenses."⁴⁶

July 1st, 1901, was the date chosen by the employers for the change in the payment system. Prior to that date, the wages were as follows: chief engineer £2. 6s. per week, plus food; second engineer £1.16s. per week, plus food;

third hand £1. 6s. per week, plus food; deckhand and cook £1. 2s. per week, plus food. The terms formulated by the employers but rejected by many of the employees were: chief engineer £1.10s. per week and 4d. poundage; second engineer £1. 4s. and 3d. poundage; third hand £1 and 3d. poundage; deckhand £1 and 2d. poundage, and the cook 17s.0d. and 2d. poundage.⁴⁷

From July 1st, 1901, crews were not allowed to sign on unless they accepted the new system and payments scale. The trawler engineers reacted to this instruction by a spontaneous withdrawal of their labour. Within a short space of time over 400 trawlers were tied up in the fish dock. The owners' federation claimed that the industry at Grimsby was in decline, that profits were almost non-existent and if the men refused the new terms, then the industry would cease to exist in Grimsby.⁴⁸ The Grimsby public found this pessimistic forecast somewhat difficult to grasp, whilst the men themselves rejected it altogether:

"Vessels would pay well, and the dividends would be large but for the heavy directors' fees, the high salaries of officials, and the many trading bonuses which render it impossible to present an honest balance sheet. The men chiefly concerned in the companies are also the men concerned in the ice companies, the coal syndicate, and the various stores and fitting shops. They are able to make the expenses of the vessels as heavy as they wish and secure their profits in other ways, and it would therefore be suicidal to go on the share system. Already the owners, although the vessels show practically speaking no profit at the end of the year, are making large incomes by directors' fees, by salaries, by commission on sales, and by their numerous bonuses."⁴⁹

Where some of the trawler companies were concerned, the profitability of their vessels was not as sparse as their

employees believed. The Queen Steam Fishing Company, for example, earned enough profit in 1901 to encourage the directors to declare an ordinary share dividend of 14 per cent, with tax paid by the company (see Chapter 4, pp.205-206). The above quotation does reveal, however, the suspicion of the men concerning the interlocking directorships of their employers which brought the steam trawler companies into a close relationship with ancillary business firms.

Of the approximately 1,000 engineers and firemen employed by the Grimsby trawler companies, about 850 were members of the Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union and over 100 were, along with a few score of deckhands, members of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union (which was to become the National Union of Seamen)⁵⁰. The overwhelming majority of deckhands and cooks, who numbered several thousands and who were not members of the trade union movement, were advised by the engineers to join the Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union (later the General and Municipal Workers' Union) which was formed in 1889 for semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers. At a meeting of engineers and firemen at the Friendly Societies Hall in Grimsby, on the evening of 1st July, 1901, the advantages of trade union membership to unorganised workers were pointed out to the deckhands:

"Mr. Firbank of the engineers wished that night to recommend one of the finest organisations in the world to the fishermen and fish labourers in Grimsby, the Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union. It was the most

powerful organisation in the world, bar none. It was a society which covered 80 grades so that if six grades were on strike there were 74 other grades working and backing them up, and feeding them continually."⁵¹

Members of the Grimsby Trawl Fishermen's Protective Society, most of whom were skippers and mates, expressed some sympathy for the engineers' refusal to accept the new terms of payment even although their incomes were based exclusively on the share system, i.e. skippers received $1\frac{3}{8}$ shares and mates $1\frac{1}{8}$ shares out of a total of fourteen shares of net earnings of their vessels. At a meeting of the engineers' union on 7th July, a letter of support and sympathy from the GTFPS was read to the two hundred and thirty members present:

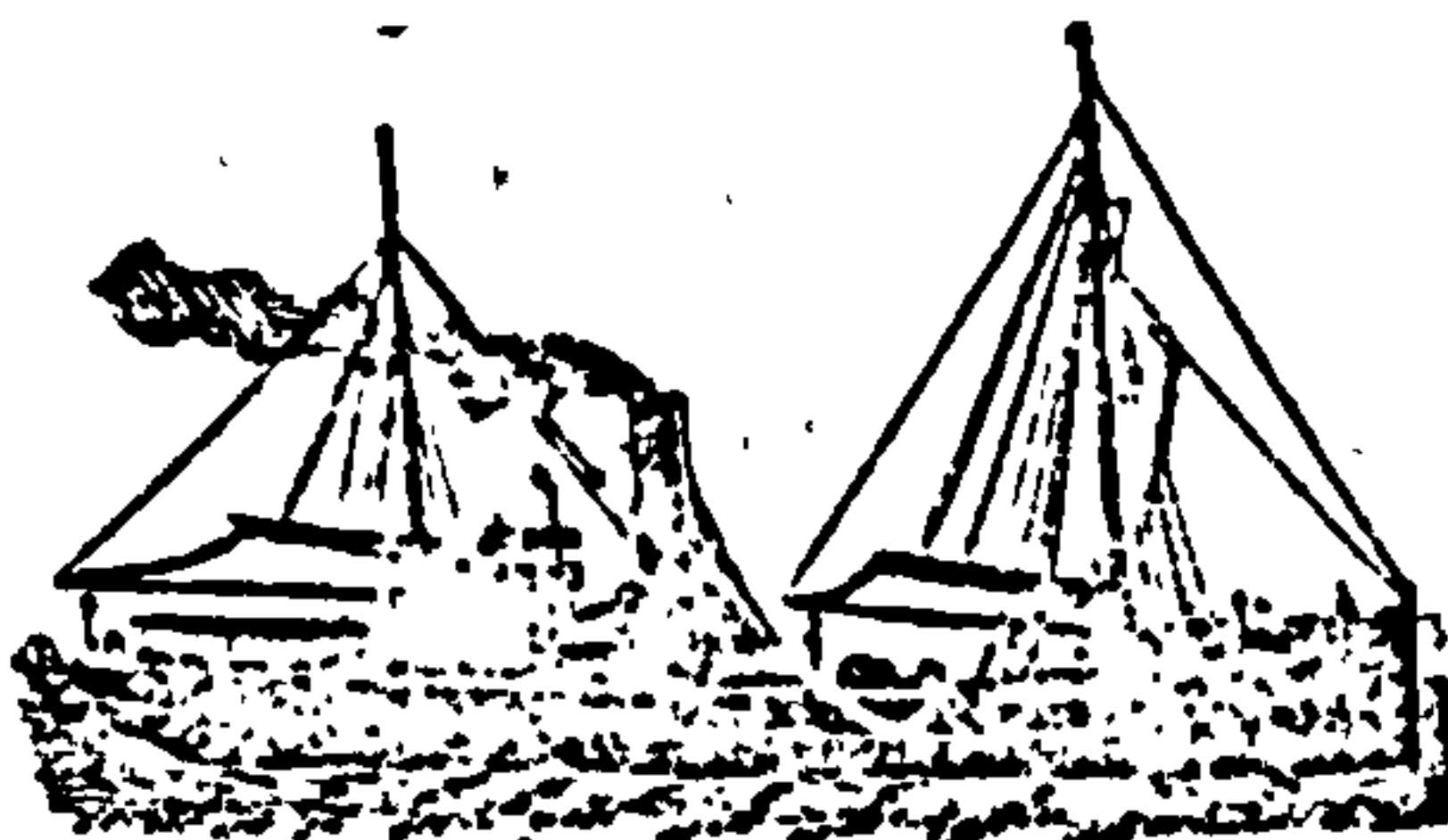
"(It was) mov. by Bro. I. Carruthers and sec. by Bro. John Skiffell, that the members of the GFVE & F Union send fraternal greetings to the members of the Grimsby Fishermen's Protection Society, at the same time thanking them very sincerely for the very kind expression of sympathy sent to the members of this union. We also deeply regret that the Masters & Mates of the above society are unavoidably affected by the action of the Federated Owners Protection Society in locking out the Engineers and Fishermen of this port. We trust that the cordial relationships thus shown to, and greatly appreciated by us will long continue. (carried)."⁵²

Several hundred deckhands, along with scores of cooks, joined the Gas Workers' Union in the early days of the dispute. The dispute, which continued for some fourteen weeks was, at all times, seen by the employers as a 'strike' and by the engineers as a 'lock-out' (see Dispute Leaflet "Great Lock-out in the Fishing Trade at Grimsby", p.310).⁵³

DOCUMENT 1

GRIMSBY DISPUTE LEAFLET

Leaflet issued by the Grimsby Steam Fishing
Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union,
during the Dispute in 1901



The Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union.

REGISTERED OFFICE

8, RIBY SQUARE, GRIMSBY.

GREAT
LOCK-OUT IN THE FISHING TRADE
AT GRIMSBY.

FELLOW WORKERS,

For the last thirteen weeks we have been Locked-out in consequence of the Fishing Vessel Owners of Grimsby endeavouring to force upon us conditions of employment and rates of wages that are incompatible with our earning a living and reasonable wage, or following our calling with any degree of comfort or safety. We received but the scantiest notice of the proposed changes, we had to take them or leave them. It was unanimously decided to reject them, and as our fellow-members came in from sea they fully endorsed our action by leaving their ships to fight the battle with us.

The terms submitted to us are of a most outrageous nature, as they practically mean a reduction of some 8/- to 10/- each per week upon the usual rates previously paid. There are also several obnoxious labour conditions imposed, that have never been in operation since the inception of the Fishing Industry, and which the Engineers cannot accept. These facts, we contend, are a complete justification for our ~~organised action~~.

During the time we have been locked out we have made repeated offers to the Federated Owners in the interests of peace, but we have been unable to extract any modification of their unjust proposals that would justify our returning to work. Under these circumstances we have even gone so far as to offer to return to work under the conditions prevailing prior to the dispute, if the Owners will allow a Joint Committee, representing all sections of the workers affected, to meet them to discuss and arrange a settlement of the differences existing at a round table conference. Our request was not granted.

Finally, and with the object of ending the frightful state of misery and destitution existing in the town, we decided to resume work upon the Employers' terms, upon condition that the whole of the wages question be submitted to an independent Arbitrator, appointed by the Board of Trade. This offer has also been refused, as the Owners will not agree to Arbitration, clearly proving to the men affected and the general public that they have not a just case. The struggle will no doubt be prolonged indefinitely, as nothing but the ruin of our Organization and an unconditional surrender of the men will satisfy the Employers. It is our intention to resist this to the uttermost.

As a consequence of this deplorable dispute, we have no less than 700 Members on our books, all of whom are in need of immediate assistance. Our Society having been in existence only 4½ years has paid out in Lock-Out Claims, since the commencement of hostilities, considerably over £3,000, which has practically exhausted our funds. We are, therefore, entirely dependent upon the assistance rendered to us by the Organised Workers of the country, to keep our people from absolute starvation.

We, therefore, earnestly appeal to you with confidence for assistance, if you have not already given us your generous support.

Ours is a battle for the Right. It is a fight between Labour and organised combines of Capital, whose chief weapon is starvation. They have endeavoured to starve us and our families into submission: but we have managed to frustrate these despicable tactics up to the present. We have no hesitation in stating that we are winning. If we can resist a little longer, proposals must emanate from the Owners' Federation that will admit of a greater degree of comfort being assured to us in our hazardous calling than will be the case if we are unfortunately compelled to accept the degrading conditions now before us.

We shall be glad if you can assist us to obtain our rights by a Donation, however small, which would be thankfully received. If your Committee desires the presence of a Delegate we shall be glad to send a Member, or forward any further particulars they may deem necessary.

Yours fraternally,

WILLIAM WESTON, President.
JOHN COLLINS, Secretary.

September 26th, 1901.

All Cheques and Postal Orders to be made payable to JOHN COLLINS, 8, RIBY SQUARE, GRIMSBY.

For a large number of trawlermen and their families the dispute brought considerable hardship. On a number of occasions, the engineers' union and the other trade unions expressed a willingness to take the dispute to arbitration but on each occasion the owners' association insisted that there could be no agreement on this particular course of action until the men returned to work on the proposed terms.⁵⁴ The dispute was peaceable enough in the early weeks but the growing destitution suffered by the trawler crews and their families, and other workers who were put out of work by the dispute, and the attempts by some trawler companies to recruit foreign crews, aroused the ire of some and, on 18th September, a riot took place in which the offices of the employers' association were wrecked and three members of the staff including the Secretary, J. Nesbit escaped through a sky-light on to the roof and from there they effected an entry to the next-door building, which belonged to the Great Grimsby Coal, Salt and Tanning Company Limited. From there they made good their escape from the rioters. Two journalists from the *Grimsby News* entered the association's offices shortly after the mob had departed and they recorded their experience:

As soon as possible we found our way into the wrecked building, where a scene of disconsolate ruin met the eye. The work had been thoroughly carried out. Pieces of furniture lay about in a heap with the leaves of log books and ledgers. Partitions had been broken up into match wood, the counter panels were smashed through, the marble mantels were smashed. Even the fireplaces were broken, and the match-boarding torn from the walls, whilst from the bare spaces long pieces of gas

piping hung in fantastic shapes to mark where the gas fittings had been. Inside the secretary's room the crowd had evidently wrecked their deepest vengeance. On its back on the floor lay the safe forced open by the same crowbar apparently that Mr. Nesbit had used for his escape. This safe had contained, so it is reported £10, including a five pound note, also a bottle of whisky. The money from the safe and also out of the till was quickly pocketed, the whisky drunk and a box of cigars appropriated. Everything that could be broken was broken."⁵⁵

Blame for this riotous conduct was directed against the deckhands and fishing apprentices. The engineers denied any responsibility, they claimed (and most contemporary observers agreed) that they were indeed free from blame. On the day following this affray, the police drew their batons and charged a crowd of innocent bystanders, many of whom were shop assistants on their half-day, it being Thursday afternoon.⁵⁶ Groups of police officers were sent to Grimsby from Sheffield and Manchester. In addition, soldiers of the Lincolnshire Regiment were quartered, in the Royal Artillery Barracks, in the town and the riot act was read to the townspeople:

"The Riot Act was read in Grimsby last evening. Around eight o'clock Mr. Joseph Hewson, J.P., proceeded to Riby Square and, surrounded by a force of police, read the Riot Act from a waggonette. Chief Constable Stirling explained what the Act meant and recommended all respectable people to go home. If they stayed in the streets, he would not be responsible for the consequences."⁵⁷

Some ten days later and following the intervention of Lord Yarborough and Lord Henege, the men agreed to go back to sea. Many of the trade unionists were convinced that they had defeated the owners and that they had won a resounding victory:

"Great credit and unbounded praise must be given to the general public of Grimsby for their sympathy and liberality, for the noble manner in which they responded to the cry for help from their fellow-townsmen in distress. And further we, as a Joint Dispute Committee, representing the majority of the workers in the fishing industry, desire to express our heartfelt gratitude to our fellow-workers throughout the country for the generous support which has enabled us to win this glorious victory."58

However, the truth of the matter was that the men had suffered a comprehensive defeat. They returned to sea, on the terms dictated by the Owners' Federation, with the agreement that the whole affair would be resolved by arbitration. As a leader in the *Times* commented:

"It is an obvious reflection that the fishing trade of Grimsby is thus placed in exactly the position it occupied at the beginning of the strike. The men are now going to make a trial of new conditions of labour after wasting their substance in a thirteen weeks' struggle. Common sense would have dictated a fair trial of the new conditions in the first instance, and without any struggle. They have gone without wages for thirteen weeks and have permanently injured their industry merely because they chose to think that a grievance might result from the new proposals."59

Whilst the *Times* was correct in stating that the men had returned under the conditions specified by their employers earlier in the year, it was manifestly incorrect to conclude that the dispute had caused the fishing industry at Grimsby to suffer a permanent injury. The owners' decision to introduce the new payments system in July was, from their perspective, timely since the market had in previous years experienced a glut of fish during the summer months. They were of the opinion that they would

not suffer heavy losses if their vessels were kept in the port for several weeks.

Sir Edward Fry, who was to become a Lord Justice of Appeal, was appointed arbitrator by the Board of Trade and his report was published on 16th December, 1901. Fry's award gave the men a minimum wage which was slightly in excess of the employers' terms, and a share, for all trawler-crew members, of the net profits of the catch. He supported the demand made by the engineers' and fishermen's union that men should sign on at the offices of the Board of Trade and not at the employers' premises.⁶⁰ Fry, himself, offered the observation that:

"I was impressed by the view that much of the unsatisfactory state of things at Grimsby was due to the owners of the trawlers being hasty and short-sighted in their pursuit of gain and careless of the welfare of their men. And I was clear that the influence of the agent at the Board of Trade in the port would be useful, as that of an impartial and disinterested person."⁶¹

There are numerous similarities between the disputes which occurred in Aberdeen and Grimsby within the space of a year. For example, in both ports it was the engineers and firemen who were trade unionists and it was their unions which played a major part in each dispute. As we have seen, contemporary observers commented upon their orderly conduct during the dispute. In contrast, the overwhelming majority of deckhands and cooks were not trade union members. Some were indifferent, or even hostile, to trade unions and of those who joined the trade union movement during the dispute, most relinquished membership shortly after the disputes ended.

There was also in both ports, and in Hull, a widespread hostility amongst trawler crews, including skippers and mates, concerning the content of the vessel's expenses. These expenses were determined by the employers and the view of their employees was that their deductions from the gross earnings of the voyage were fabricated in order to favour the interests of the former against those of the latter.⁶² In addition, the engineers and firemen in the major ports were much more favourably disposed towards a fixed weekly wage which had been established for over a decade (see Appendix 2, Crew Lists and Agreements for Aberdeen trawler *Pioneer*, dated 31st December, 1897). Moreover, the engineers and firemen were concerned that the share system of payment, coupled with a reduction in the weekly wage, might stimulate conflict between themselves and the deck-crews. The former believed that they and the work they performed were so distinct from the latter and their shipboard tasks and responsibilities, that it was eminently sensible to have two systems of payment - or three if skippers and mates were included - for the crews of trawlers.⁶³

Tunstall is of the opinion that a pattern of employment procedures and practices was established by the Grimsby dispute and that the Fry award strengthened its development for decades to come:

"Sir Edward Fry's award remains a classic document in the development of the industry, and the issues and conflicts behind the bald facts of the dispute are of considerable relevance to the present-day situation."⁶⁴

Analysis of the Aberdeen dispute, which Tunstall ignores in his book, gives added strength to his argument. Tunstall, however, goes further than this with his claim that:

".....the share element, which at first was of minor importance, in time came to make up a greater proportion of earnings. Looking back we can see that the engineers' suspicion of the share system was justified. Had the straight basic-wage payment been retained the history of fishermen's trade unionism (and the nature of the whole industry today) would almost certainly have been different."⁶⁵

This claim has to be treated with caution, rather than disbelief, since there is some substance to it, although Tunstall chooses to ignore the fact that he is dealing with one segment of the catching sector of the industry, i.e. the trawler companies and their employees. It has to be pointed out that the trade unions were unable to recruit successfully amongst other fishermen who have always formed the majority of the industry's sea-going labour force. Also, Tunstall's study was primarily concerned with the working lives of Hull fishermen in the twentieth century, during which period, almost all of them were employed in companies. On the other hand, Tunstall is close to the heart of the matter with his emphasis on the history of industrial relations and employment practices giving shape to the contemporary structure of this segment of the industry."⁶⁶

In the twentieth century the major fishing ports experienced both a proliferation of localised, port-based trade unions for the crews of company-owned trawlers

and a marked difference in the density of trade union membership between engineroom staff and deckhands, cooks, skippers and mates. In addition, there was a pronounced failure in the attempts of active trade unionists to recruit members in the smaller ports.

Intensive efforts were made by some trade unionists to form unions for more than one port or to merge extant port-based unions into larger organisations. In Scotland, for example, the Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessels' Enginemen's and Firemen's Union encouraged the formation of a branch in Leith in 1905 and once this was achieved, its name was changed to the Scottish Steam Fishing Vessels' Enginemen's and Firemen's Union.⁶⁷ As its subsequent title suggests, its membership was drawn from the enginerooms of the trawlers. In a calculated change of policy towards more substantial representation, delegates at the union's annual conference in 1923 introduced comprehensive changes to the structure and rules of the union in order to recruit deckhands and cooks to membership.⁶⁸ From 12th January, 1924, the new title of the Scottish trade union was the Scottish Sea Fishers' Union.⁶⁹

During disputes in smaller Scottish fishing ports, attempts were made by the Scottish Steam Fishing Vessels' Enginemen's and Firemen's Union to both recruit and assist those engineers and firemen in dispute with their employers. However, given the dispersed structure of the ownership of vessels in these ports the SSFVE & FU was rarely successful in either of these two activities. Where the fishermen

themselves were concerned, even although some were employed by small capitalist organisations, there was a reluctance to join the trade union movement and when they became members, during a dispute, they quickly gave up membership following a cessation of industrial hostilities.

In a letter he wrote to his fiancé in 1907, Joseph F. Duncan, General Secretary of the SSFVE & FU, commented on the attitudes and behaviour of fishermen in Peterhead who were involved in a wages dispute with their employers in that year:

"Down the centre wander the fishermen in sleeved waistcoats, and blue cheese-cutter caps, wandering in idle, listless way not knowing how to do with their time. At the corners they stand in groups discussing the wages question. This union business is foreign to them. They have wandered from their old, rude communism into some capitalist industry. They dread the money lords and how they are threatened with the power of organised wage workers. It makes them uneasy because they do not know how to face it."70

Actually, the trawler companies in Peterhead were not 'threatened with the power of organised wage workers' since they were not incommoded by the stoppage. As with disputes in the major ports, their vessels continued to sail, recruitment of strike-breakers was a simple task and the pickets made little or no attempt to prevent such sailings. In subsequent letters, Duncan readily acknowledged, to his fiancé at least, that the trade union and its membership were quite powerless to alter these circumstances:

"I got here on Friday to find the men completely demoralised as to whether they should go back or no. These men it has been a struggle to keep them out, a struggle that has not yet finished and which I have little hope of finishing successfully. They are a poor poor lot. They get drunk every opportunity they have and neglect their work scandalously. Time and again I have seen them throw away opportunities for the sake of getting a drink and do what I can I cannot prevent them from going drinking with blacklegs. I don't know what the upshot is going to be. They may collapse on our hands at any moment."⁷¹

In the event, the dispute collapsed the following day when most of the remaining strikers sought re-engagement.⁷²

The Scottish engineers' union continued for many years to argue for a weekly-wages payment system for its members. In his interview with the members of the Scottish Departmental Committee of Inquiry on the North Sea Fishing Industry in 1914, Duncan stated that the work of the men in the engineroom of a trawler was quite distinct from the work performed by the deck-crew, in that their watches (shifts) were of a regular length, that the nature of their work was unvarying and that there was nothing they could do to increase the size or quality of the vessels' catches.⁷³ He also contended that the employers were quite willing to pay the men a fixed wage when profits were high but when profits were low then they, the employers, sought to change to the share system.⁷⁴ It will be seen from Appendix 6, p.590, Crews' Wages, Issued by Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessels Owners Association, that the Aberdeen engineers and firemen continued to be paid on a weekly basis long after their counterparts in Grimsby and Hull

had had their wages transferred to a wages and poundage system.

Unlike the deckhands and cooks, who were to retain a low level of trade union membership (or density) for many decades, the engineers' unions in Scotland and England acknowledged the need to maintain close links between themselves and to this end the SSFVE & FU, the GSFVE & FU along with the Humber (Hull) and Fleetwood Amalgamated Steam Trawler Engineers' and Fishermen's Union (HASTE & FU) formed the National Federation of Enginemen, Stokers, and Kindred Trade Societies in 1907.⁷⁵ It was believed that membership of this federation would enable these trade unions to campaign more successfully than hitherto for changes in the terms and conditions of employment of their members. Of particular concern to the unions was the need for the state to introduce a system of certification of competency for chief and second engineers.⁷⁶ The vessel owners' associations had introduced, in conjunction with local educational institutions, certificates of competency in all the major ports but the trade unions were dissatisfied with these schemes,⁷⁷ which were seen to be inadequate, particularly in the light of recent developments in the design and operation of marine engines.

Despite this apparent willingness to combine in order to defend the interests of their members, the localised, port-based trade unions were reluctant to form a national body.⁷⁸ Apart from the engineers' unions, other trade unions and associations were formed amongst deckcrews and

skippers and mates. For example, in Aberdeen in 1914, the Aberdeen branch of the PHTFFPS was dissolved and in its place the Aberdeen Fishermen's Society was formed with the General Secretary of the former, W.H. Cressey, taking on the same position in the latter.⁷⁹ However, this new union was dissolved in 1916 and it was succeeded by an Aberdeen branch of the National Sailors and Firemen's Union which recruited members amongst skippers, mates, deckhands, cooks and engineers.⁸⁰ In Granton, the Granton and District TrawlFishermen's Protective Union was established in November, 1911, its General Secretary being a John Liston who had his office in Lambs Court, Newhaven. It too sought to recruit members from all ranks on the steam trawlers.⁸¹ It was not successful in its attempts to recruit from both deck and engineroom crew members, since *inter alia* it was in direct competition with the SSFVE & FU's branch in the same port, and it was dissolved in November, 1920.⁸²

By the early nineteen-thirties there were numerous trade unions and other organisations representing members drawn from all levels of trawler crews. For example, in most of the major ports there were associations of trawler skippers and mates, usually with the title of 'Trawler Officers' Guild', as in Grimsby and Hull. In addition to the engineers' trade unions, the T & GWU had acquired members from amongst the deckhands and cooks. It was a fishermen's trade union, the National Union of British Fishermen, which had been one of the founding labour organisations that gave rise to the formation of the T & GWU in January, 1922.⁸³

The Hull Fish Market, circa 1922.



Source: Hull Daily Mail.

Despite the proliferation of fishing trade unions, the activists and officials still had to grapple with the problems associated with the reluctance of many deckhands to become members. This difference between the commitment of engineers and firemen, and the indifference of deckhands, to trade unionism, was the subject of a letter written in 1932 by Joseph Duncan, General Secretary of the Scottish Sea Fishers' Union, to branch members. Duncan and his trade union colleagues had resisted a proposal by the AFVOA to reduce the wages of Aberdeen chief engineers and second engineers by 1s. 6d. per day and other crew-members' wages by 1s. 0d. per day. The dispute was resolved by the trade union agreeing to a reduction of 4d. per day for all wage-earners on these vessels. Duncan in his letter observed:

".....if there had been no Scottish Sea Fishers' Union to put up the case for the workers, wages would have been reduced still further. At the least it has saved 4d. a day for you.If you are not a member of the Union, you are drawing 4d. a day which your mates have had to work and pay for.It is the non-Unionists who always tie our hands in every wage dispute. It is time we did some plain speaking to the non-Unionists. For 28 years now I have been connected with the fishing in Aberdeen. During all that time wages have been negotiated by the Scottish Sea Fishers' Union. We have had other Unions appearing but they have been mere flashes in the pan. We have stuck to the job, and we have had to do the job for the non-Unionists all the time."84

In each of the major ports in the nineteen-thirties, employers' associations had to deal with trade unions and associations representing engineers and firemen, deckhands and cooks, skippers and mates, and following the installation

of wireless telegraphy in the larger vessels, wireless operators. Even with the growing influence and participation of the T & GWU which was, and remains, one of the largest trade unions in Western Europe, the employers negotiated with small, port-based associations that had little or no influence upon the determination of terms and conditions of employment. The failure to amalgamate the various trade unions coupled with the failure to attract deckhands to trade unionism were key factors shaping the employment relationship.⁸⁵

As recently as the mid nineteen-thirties some employers' associations refused to meet, let alone negotiate with, officials of the T & GWU. At a Court of Inquiry convened to examine a dispute in the Hull fishing industry, Arthur Deakin, the Assistant General Secretary of the T & GWU, stated that he had been refused access to officials of the HFVOA.⁸⁶ This dispute had arisen from the decision taken by the employers to reduce the earnings of deckhands and cooks for the work of extracting oil from fish livers (the dispute was known popularly as the 'liver-oil' strike). The *Times* commented:

"The men's union does not say that there should be no reduction of cod-liver oil money. It says that the trawler-owners have acted arbitrarily and have not attempted to justify the reduction they have made. The strike is a consequence of a refusal to open negotiations."⁸⁷

Deakin in his address to the court of inquiry objected to the employers' refusal to grant negotiating rights to the T & GWU. He also criticised the posting of a postcard to

Hull fishermen at their homes, the message of which was that:

".....professional agitators were solely responsible for the commencement and continuation of the strike."⁸⁸

Whilst Deakin and his colleagues did not place the responsibility of this action upon the owners or their officials, Tunstall is convinced that they were responsible, since no other organisation or body could have known the home addresses of several thousand fishermen.⁸⁹

In issuing its decision that the reduction in payment for this particular task should be half the figure sought by the owners' association, the court members observed:

"We were glad to receive ample evidence of a sincere desire for the maintenance of the happy relations that had existed in the past between the Owners and men in their employment.We were informed that the Owners Association, though recognising for the purposes of negotiation certain Unions in which various ratings in the industry were organised, had not been prepared to negotiate with the Transport and General Workers' Union, which at the time of the dispute had the greatest membership among the deckhands and cooks."⁹⁰

There were approximately five hundred members of the T & GWU before the dispute took place and within a few days of its commencement that figure had increased threefold.⁹¹ In this way, the dispute was characteristic of other disputes in the industry, i.e. there was an immediate and enthusiastic response from non-unionists to join the T & GWU but that this commitment to trade unionism was transitory in nature and the membership fell back. Tunstall argued that there is another problem here with a large trade union seeking to

TABLE 17

Number and Ages of Steam Trawlers in the Major Ports in 1934

Age	Hull		Grimsby		Aberdeen		Fleetwood		Milford-Haven		Granton		North Shields		Lowestoft		Remaining Ports		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 10 years	156	47	60	12	29	10	9	6	3	4	3	5	2	3	10	15	22	20	294	10
10 and under 15 years	30	9	3	1	3	1	4	3	4	5	-	-	-	-	3	5	3	3	50	2
15 and under 20 years	53	16	131	27	82	29	52	35	37	55	24	37	36	54	9	13	21	19	445	30
20 and under 25 years	37	11	121	24	63	22	44	30	3	4	27	41	19	28	6	9	20	18	340	23
25 years and over	54	17	178	36	108	28	38	26	36	43	11	17	10	15	39	58	45	40	519	35
	330	100	493	100	285	100	147	100	83	100	65	100	67	100	67	100	111	100	1,648	100

Source: Tables VI and VII, *Sea Fish Commission for the United Kingdom, Second Report: The White Fish Industry*, HMSO, London, 1938, Cmnd.5130, p.18.

TABLE 18
Ownership of Trawlers at the Major Ports in 1934

Class of Ownership i.e. Number of vessels per concern	Number of Concerns	Number of Vessels	Percentage of Vessels in each Class of Ownership					
			Total	Hull	Grimsby	Aberdeen	Fleetwood	Milford Haven
Under 5	206	352	% 28	% 11	% 25	% 41	% 31	% 56
5 to 9	39	240	19	15	17	28	20	13
10 to 19	26	326	25	22	25	22	36	31
Over 19	12	362	28	52	33	9	13	-
	283	1,280	100	100	100	100	100	100

SOURCE: Table VIII, *Sea Fish Commission for the United Kingdom, Second Report: The White Fish Industry*, HMSO, London, 1938, Cmnd.5130, P.20.

represent fishermen since because of its size, officials are too remote from the members.⁹²

In the mid-nineteen thirties there were eight major fishing ports within which the trawler companies operated, i.e. Aberdeen, Fleetwood, Granton, Grimsby, Hull, Lowestoft, Milford Haven, and North Shields. Of these, Aberdeen, Fleetwood, Grimsby, Hull and Milford Haven were the largest, in terms of size of fleets, personnel employed, weight and value of landings and ancillary industrial organisations.⁹³

There were in 1934, 1,318 steam trawlers of varying age (see Table 17 , p.326) which gave employment to approximately 21,000 sea-going personnel⁹⁴. This fleet of 1,648 vessels was owned by 374 trawler companies. Since the beginning of the century group ownership had grown considerably but there were, at this time, still 156 owners of single vessels, found mainly in Aberdeen and Milford Haven.⁹⁵ At the five largest ports, over 25 per cent of the vessels were owned in groups of less than five, whereas 38 companies owned 688 vessels, or over 50 per cent of the total for these ports (see Table 18, p.327). Some of these companies were, in the nineteen thirties, more profitable than others. This was particulatly true of Hull where most of the companies were concerned with fishing operations in the distant-water fishing grounds.⁹⁶

Inter-locking directorships and financial investments in ancillary industrial organisations were established

features of the major ports in the nineteen-thirties. As we have seen with the examination of the Queen Steam Fishing Company in Chapter 4, these directorships and investments linking the trawler companies with provision merchants, vessel-repairers and ice-companies were a key element in the growth and development of the trawler companies. In addition, group ownership, combined with both port vessel-owners' associations and ancillary organisations, played an important role in the development of industrial relations and conditions of employment throughout the ports.⁹⁷ Moreover, these port owners' associations were members of a national association, the British Trawlers Federation which was constituted in 1918. By 1935 the BTF, which represented 90 per cent of all trawler owners in Britain, had become a powerful political pressure group on behalf of the trawler owners.⁹⁸ The evidence would seem to suggest that the state and successive political administrations regarded the BTF as a more formidable advocate than the various trade unions representing the trawler crews.⁹⁹

In contrast with the complementary perspectives of the overwhelming majority of vessel-owners and their agreement on courses of action, the trade unions representing the fishermen were, in the nineteen-thirties, mainly port-based organisations which made few attempts to combine at a national level. Some changes took place; for example in 1937 the SSFU amalgamated with the T & GWU and became its Scottish fishing section. The reaction of the

GSFVE & FU can be gauged from a perusal of that union's minutes books. At one meeting, following a report on the dissolution of the National Federation of Enginemen, the secretary recorded that:

"The question of the amalgamation of the Scottish Fishers' Union with the Transport and General Workers' Union was fully commented on by both Bros. Thompson and Roe and which clearly showed that Grimsby was to be more than congratulated on keeping her own end up, and especially so after hearing reports from Hull and Aberdeen, re this step with the National Union. The report of the state of trade and organisation of the different fishing ports conclusively proved that Grimsby was in a far better state than the other ports concerned."¹⁰⁰

In the following year, HASTE & FU merged with the T & GWU.¹⁰¹

The trawler companies, some more profitable than others, continued to employ their crews on a casual basis that is to say that crew-members were signed on for one voyage at a time. In some forty years of existence the fishermen's trade unions had not mounted a serious challenge to this employment practice, nor had they reduced the working hours of trawler crews, let alone improved their working conditions. Those employed in the engine room of trawlers worked an eighty-four hour, seven day week, whilst the deckcrews frequently worked eighteen hour watches, or in excess of one hundred and twenty hours in a seven days long week.¹⁰²

The powerlessness of the trade unions vis-à-vis the employers and the state was to continue for another four decades. Skippers and mates were remunerated by a share of the net earnings of their vessels whilst all other crew

members, on deck and in the engine-room, received a weekly wage and poundage. The weekly wages were usually given to the wives, or other members of the fishermen's families, whilst the vessels were at sea.

REFERENCES

1. The number of references to industrial disputes in the *Times* recorded by the Webbs are as follows:

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1876	17	1881	20	1886	24
1877	23	1882	14	1887	27
1878	38	1883	26	1888	37
1879	72	1884	31	1889	111
1880	46	1885	20		

See S. and B. Webb, '*The History of Trade Unionism, 1920*', pp.347-350.

2. J.E. Cronin, '*Industrial Conflict in Modern Britain*', Croom Helm, London, 1979, pp.48-51.
3. *Daily Free Press*, 2nd April, 1900.
4. *Annual Report of the Trades Union Congress for the Year 1889*, Dundee, p.12.
5. *Rules of the National Federation of Fishermen of Great Britain and Ireland, 1890, Section C, Vol.90, Item No.V*, Webb Collection, p.1.
6. *ibid.*
7. *The Fishermen*, Vol.1, No.1, March, 1891, p.2.
8. These six delegates were G.H. Cook, G.H. Goodinson, R. Manton, T.C. Taylor, R. Frayne and J. Carrick. *Annual Report of the Trades Union Congress of 1891*, Newcastle, p.12.
9. *The Fishermen*, *ibid.* pp.10-12.
10. *Annual Report of the TUC, 1891*, pp.59-60.
11. *The Fishermen*, *ibid.* p.10.
12. *The Fishermen*, Vol.1, No.3, April, 1891, p.7.
13. See S. Pritchard, '*Fish and Ships*'.

14. The word 'coper' is from dialect cope to buy, barter from Low German and it appears to be related to Dutch, *koopen*, to buy. Collins *English Dictionary*, London, 1979 Edition.
15. *The Fishermen*, Vol.1, No.4, May, 1891, p.3.
16. *ibid.* p.3.
17. *ibid.* p.4.
18. See, for example, S.S. Mowbray, *op.cit.*, and E.J. Marsh, *op.cit.*
19. *Grimsby Observer* 13th, 27th April and 4th May, 1892.
20. *Annual Report of the Trades Union Congress of 1892*, Glasgow, p.41.
21. *Glasgow Herald*, 6th September, 1892.
22. E.W.L. Holt commented thus on the heterogeneity of steam-trawler crews in the early nineteen-nineties:

Pretty nearly all the nations of the earth are now represented in the North Sea trawling community, from Kroomen (*sic*) to Faroe and on this occasion our skipper was a Prussian and his mate a Dane."

E.W.L. Holt, *op.cit.*, p.20.
23. *File F/S 7/15/658*, Public Record Office, Kew, Richmond, Surrey.
24. R. Manton, *The Fishermen*, Vol.1, No.3, April, 1891, pp.8-9.
25. *ibid.* p.3.
26. *File F/S 12/J30/1062*, Public Record Office.

27. *Minutes of the Meeting of the Aberdeen Trades Council, 13th December, 1899, MS.2270.7, Aberdeen University Library Archives, Aberdeen.* K.D. Buckley suggests that the Aberdeen trade union was established in order to contest the practice of their employers to retain one penny per day from the employees' wages which went towards a provident fund for the next of kin of those lost or killed at sea. (See Buckley, *op.cit.* p.71) The fund was administered by a board of trustees, the overwhelming majority of whom were drawn from the ranks of the trawler owners. Whilst the administration of the 'penny-a-day fund', as it is still known in Aberdeen, was viewed with dissatisfaction by the fishermen, who demanded either the abolition of the fund, or greater involvement by the trade union in its administration, its abolition was but one of several demands made by the trade union within months of its formation. See the *Minutes of the Meeting of the Aberdeen Trades Council, 16th May, 1900, MS 2270/7, Aberdeen University Library.*

28. *Report and Balance Sheet for the Seven Months Ending 31st December, 1897, Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels' Engineers' and Firemen's Union.* This document, with other GSFVE & FU documents, is kept in the Grimsby District Office of the Transport & General Workers' Union, Cleethorpe Road, Grimsby.

29. The last remaining copy of this document is retained in the T & GWU District Office, Grimsby.

30. *Daily Free Press, 7th May, 1900.*

31. *Daily Free Press, 9th May, 1900.*

32. *Daily Free Press, 12th May, 1900.*

33. *ibid.*

34. *ibid.*

35. *Daily Free Press, 14th May, 1900.*

36. *Daily Free Press 15th May, 1900.*

37. *ibid.*

38. *Daily Free Press*, 16th May, 1900.
39. *Daily Free Press*, 17th May, 1900.
40. *Daily Free Press*, 18th May, 1900.
41. *ibid.*
42. *Daily Free Press*, 28th May, 1900.
43. *Daily Free Press*, 29th May, 1900.
44. *Annual Report of the Inspectors on Sea Fisheries (England and Wales) for the year 1901.*
45. *Grimsby News*, 5th July, 1901.
46. *ibid.*
47. *ibid.* 4d. in the £, 3d. in the £, and so on.
48. *ibid.*
49. *Grimsby News*, 5th July, 1901.
One notable feature of the Aberdeen, Grimsby and Hull newspapers' dissemination of information concerning these disputes, at the beginning of the twentieth century, was the willingness of the editors to give both parties a substantial amount of column space to present their respective cases to newspaper audiences.
50. *Grimsby News*, 2nd July, 1901.
51. *ibid.*
52. Minutes of a meeting held at the Friendly Societies Hall, Grimsby, on Sunday, 7th July, 1901.
Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union Minutes Book for 1901. The District Office, Transport & General Workers' Union, Cleethorpe Road, Grimsby.

53. Throughout the whole of the dispute, the engineers and firemen at their trade union meetings referred always to the 'lock-out'. For example, the minutes of a meeting, held at the Friendly Societies Hall, on Sunday, 21st July, 1901, contain the following observation:

"Brother T. Carruthers spoke upon the Present Phase of the Lock-Out (*sic*) He thought that we had done right by sending the letter explaining our Attitude to the Federation Officials. This would let them know that our Members had not the slightest intention of accepting their outrageous terms."

Minutes Book for 1901 of the Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union.

54. *Grimsby News*, 13th September, 1901.
55. *Grimsby News*, 20th September, 1901.
56. *ibid.*
57. *ibid.*
58. *Grimsby News*, 8th October, 1901. The dispute cost the GSFVE & U £3,603.3s.10d. in dispute payments to members but donations from other trade unions totalled £2,040.6s.8d. *Minutes Book for 1901, GSFVE & FU, Grimsby.*
59. *Times*, 30th September, 1901.
60. 'Text of Award Terminating the Dispute in the Fishing Trade at Grimsby', Cd.1236, Board of Trade, London, p.34. In 1903 most Grimsby trawler companies reverted to the pre-1901 wages system for engine-room personnel.
61. A. Fry, 'A Memoir of the Right Honourable Sir Edward Fry, G.C.B., Lord Justice of Appeal, 1827-1918', Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1921.
62. The suspicions regarding the deductions of vessel expenses had had a long history; see the discussion in Chapter 5, pp.244/5; see Appendix 16, p.670 for an example of a recent Aberdeen settling sheet.

63. *Minutes of Evidence, Scottish Departmental Committee on the North Sea Fishing Industry, Edinburgh, 1914.*
Questions 6739 to 6746.
64. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* p.30.
65. *ibid.* p.34.
66. *ibid.* pp.238-258.
67. *Rule Book of the Scottish Sea Fishers' Union dated 12th January, 1924,*
A copy of this rule book is kept in the Aberdeen District Office of the Transport & General Workers' Union, 44 King Street, Aberdeen. The author also has a copy in his possession.
68. *ibid.* p.2.
69. The overwhelming majority of the Scottish Sea Fishers' Union members were to be found in the ports of Aberdeen, Dundee and Granton.
70. Letter dated 11th August, 1907. Correspondence of Joseph F. Duncan (1879-1964) Acc. 5490, Manuscript Room, The National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. Duncan was the General Secretary of the Aberdeen engineers' trade union; he remained in that position on the Scottish engineer and fishermen's union and he retained the post when that trade union became the Scottish Sea Fishers' Union. He occupied this role for well over thirty years. He is more widely known for his work as the General Secretary of the Scottish Farm Servants' Union.
71. Letter dated 17th September, 1907, Joseph Duncan correspondence.
72. It appears from his letters to his fiancé that Duncan had few illusions concerning the task of recruiting members in Peterhead and this seems to have shaped his view of the town and its inhabitants. In one letter he observed:

"Sunday in Peterhead is perhaps worse than weekdays. Under no conditions is it a pleasant town. It is a miserable ugly town of jumbled drab houses and dirty unpaved streets. It is without architecture of any kind, and without scenery. Even its bay which would have been beautiful is dominated by a prison and defiled with senseless piers. How I hate this place. The people are on a level with their town. They are the meanest-spirited, pettiest people I have ever met; a people without ideals, devoid of sympathy, debased in every trait that makes humanity lovable. I never knew men on strike to face an unsympathetic populace. It is not that they are callous: they are actively hostile and would be glad to see us beaten! A poverty-stricken licentious people strong teetotallers and drunkards, without honour and without courage, a very bestial people. I shall be glad to leave the place, I wish I could leave it now."

Letter dated 1st September, 1907, Joseph Duncan correspondence.

73. *Minutes of Evidence, Scottish Departmental Committee on the North Sea Fishing Industry, HMSO, Edinburgh, 1914.*
Q.6742.
74. *ibid.* Q.6744.
75. *Annual Report of the Trades Union Congress for the Year 1907.*
76. Report of a Deputation from the National Federation of Enginemen, Stokers, and Kindred Trade Societies that met Mr. J.M. Robertson, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, 23rd April, 1913. A copy of this report is retained in the Grimsby District Office of the T & GWU, Cleethorpe Road, Grimsby.
77. *ibid.* pp.10-12.
78. The Hull and Fleetwood engineers' union had, in fact, combined to form a single trade union some years earlier.

79. See Appendix 5, p.588.
80. *Report on the Dispute in the Aberdeen Fishing Industry in 1919 (Scottish Office) File AF62/604.* Scottish Record Office.
81. *Friendly Societies and Trade Union Registers, File No. FS-18,* Scottish Record Office.
At about this time, the crew of a steam trawler consisted of nine or ten men, i.e. skipper, mate (second-fisherman), three or four deckhands, chief engineer, second engineer, fireman and a cook.
82. *ibid.* p.68.
83. The trade unions which amalgamated and gave the T & GWU its title and constitution were as follows: the Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen and Bargemen; Amalgamated Carters, Lorrymen and Motormen's Union; Amalgamated Association of Carters and Motormen; Associated Horsemen's Union; Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union; Labour Protection League; National Amalgamated Labourers' Union; National Union of Docks, Wharves and Shipping Staffs; National Union of Ships' Clerks, Grain Weighers and Coalmeters; National Union of Vehicle Workers; National Amalgamated Coal Workers' Union; National Union of Dock, Riverside and General Workers; National Union of British Fishermen; North of England Trimmers and Teemers' Association; North of Scotland Horse and Motormen's Association; United Vehicle Workers; Belfast Breadservers' Association and the Greenock Sugar Porters' Association.

By 1942 membership of the T & GWU had grown to one million, by 1970 one and a half million, and in 1978 membership had exceeded two million. Since then there has been a decline and in 1981 there were approximately one million, eight hundred thousand members.

The following industries are covered by trade groups or sections:

Administrative, Clerical, Technical and Supervisory; Vehicle Building and Automotive; Building, Construction and Civil Engineering; Building Craft Section; Chemical, Rubber and Oil Refining; Commercial Road Transport; Docks, Waterways and Fishing; Food, Drink, Tobacco (including Agriculture and Flour Milling); General Workers (including Textiles and Man-Made Fibres); Passenger Services; Power and Engineering, Public Services and Civil Air Transport.

The General Executive Council is the governing body of the T & GWU. It is responsible for the overall administration and management of the union (the eleven Regional Committees have considerable autonomy). The Biennial Delegates is the policy-making authority of the union. Delegates to this conference are nominated by their branches.

The General Secretary is the most senior of full-time officials and he or she (there has never been a woman in the post) is elected by a ballot vote of all union members. A. Marsh, *op.cit.* pp.232-235.

84. Letter from Joseph Duncan, General Secretary, Scottish Sea Fishers' Union to Branch Chairman, dated July, 1932. Aberdeen District Office, T & GWU.
85. Disputes frequently arose in the fishing industry during the first three decades of the twentieth century. In almost all cases, however, any concessions won by the trade unions were of much smaller consequence than those obtained by trade unions representing workers in other industries, or workers in ancillary, shore-based, trades and occupations within the fishing industry itself. This can be seen, for example, in the documents concerned with a dispute in the fishing industry in Aberdeen in 1919, which are deposited in the Scottish Record Office (Catalogue No. AF 62/604). In this instance, the NSFU, which represented skippers, mates, deckhands, cooks and a very small number of engineers and firemen, sought with the support of the SFVE & FU to obtain for its members a rest period of twenty-four hours after a voyage of nine days. These two unions refused to allow the National Union of British Fishermen, which had a few score members in the port, to take part in the negotiations. During the dispute which lasted nine weeks, the general secretary of the NSFU wrote to the Prime Minister (Lloyd George) appealing for his assistance in resolving the dispute. At the end of the dispute the men were granted their claim of a day's leisure after nine days at sea. One feature of this dispute was the refusal of the owners' association to allow associated organisations to provision vessels owned by those outwith their association or from other ports.

86. *Minutes of Evidence, Report of a Court of Inquiry concerning the Dispute in the Hull Fishing Industry, 1935*, HMSO, London, 1935, Cmd.4917, p.21.
87. *Times*, 1st April, 1935. In 1931, the Hull owners had imposed a similar reduction in the 'liver-oil money' and had encountered no resistance to it.
88. *op. cit.* p.19.
89. J. Tunstall, *op. cit.* p.38.
90. *op. cit.* p.9.
91. *ibid.* p.31.
92. J. Tunstall, *op. cit.* p.252.
93. *Sea Fish Commission for the United Kingdom, Second Report, The White Fish Industry*, HMSO, 1938, Cmd. 5130.
94. *ibid.* p.27. It is widely believed in the fishing industry that the employment-multiplier ratio is in the region of 1:5 but there are those observers who would claim that this is too high a ratio. See *Employment in the Fishing Industry of Great Britain*, Fisheries Economics Research Unit, WFA, Edinburgh, February, 1975.
95. *ibid.* p.19.
96. *ibid.* pp.23-26.
97. *ibid.* p.20.
98. *ibid.* p.60.
99. *ibid.* p.73.

100. *Minutes of a meeting of the GSVE & FU held on Sunday, 3rd October, 1937, at 128 Cleethorpe Road, Grimsby, Minutes Book for 1937, GFVE & FU, Grimsby District Office, T & GWU. At this time, the GSVE & FU had approximately 550 members.*

101 *R. Hyman, op. cit. pp.132.*

102. *Sea Fish Commission Report, p.27.*

CHAPTER 7

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS

C H A P T E R 7

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN
EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS

The formation and development of the steam trawler companies, in the relatively large coastal towns and cities - or fishing ports - in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, were formative influences upon the structure of the fishing industry throughout the major part of the twentieth century.¹ Patterns of dominance, that were formed in the initial stages of the growth of the trawler company segment of the catching sector, remained largely unchanged despite the Second World War and the advances made by some sections of the trade union movement. Other occupational groups represented by the T & GWU obtained significant improvements in their terms and conditions of employment between the nineteen-thirties and the nineteen-sixties.² The employment relationship and hence the power relationship between the trawler companies and their sea-going employees, however, underwent little or no lasting change throughout the same period.³

During the Second World War, a number of casual employment practices in various industries, including maritime transport, docks and the fishing industry were subjected to state-imposed alteration, under the terms of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act.⁴ This Act enabled the Ministry of Labour to issue an Essential Work Order (EWO) for an industry in order that that industry should mobilise,

assemble and co-ordinate the work of its labour force in a more effective and efficient way. Companies that came within the framework of an EWO had to satisfy certain criteria in terms and conditions of employment. For example, employers were not allowed to base their employment policies and practices on casualism, nor were they permitted to dismiss employees without the approval of the appropriate state officials.⁵

For his or her part, the employee was forbidden to leave his or her employment without official approval and, in addition, had to accept compulsory transfer between jobs, which could involve movement from one town or city to another. One modern historian has argued that the imposition of an EWO had two major implications; it tied an employee to an employer in a modern form of "bondage" but it was, where casual employment was concerned, an "instrument for progress".⁶

Ernest Bevin, who was one of the principal draughtsmen in the formation of the T & GWU in 1922 and the Union's General Secretary at the commencement of the war, joined Churchill's Cabinet as Minister of Labour and National Service in May 1940.⁷ He advocated the need for legislative measures to counteract the problems associated with manpower shortages in key industries. One of his first decisions in this field involved employment and work practices in the docks. Wilson stated:

"In order to mobilise the nations resources, Bevin had no choice but to provide a permanent dock labour force; decasualisation was no longer a matter of humanitarian concern but of national necessity.His first

step was to make registration for dockers compulsory and require them to accept transfer between ports (June 1940). Dockers were, in fact, one of the first groups to be covered by a registration order, together with professional engineers, scientists, men in the principal engineering industries, chemists, physicists and quantity surveyors. But the dockers' order was unique in also requiring the employers to register; before the war, it had been open to employers to operate outside the registration scheme, now they had to be licensed or disbarred from hiring and the definition of dockwork could be correspondingly tightened."⁸

With the imposition of the Essential Work (Dock Labour) Order of September, 1941, government ministers and state officials believed that wide-ranging benefits would accrue to both employers and employees.⁹ The resultant employment scheme was administered by the National Dock Labour Corporation (NDLC) and financed by a fixed-percentage levy on employers' annual wages bills. The effect of this EWO, *inter alia*, was that, with the exception of the ports on the Clyde and the Mersey, dual control over the allocation of labour was exercised by the NDLC and port boards, upon which sat an equal number of employer and employee representatives.¹⁰ Registered dock workers were given a guaranteed weekly wage and "fall-back" pay when there was no work for them; thus the fear of unemployment was reduced. At the same time, restrictive practices were eliminated for the duration of the war.¹¹ Industrial disputes, despite the existence of 'Order 1305' which prohibited strikes and lock-outs, and widespread absenteeism, however, were prevalent in the docks industry throughout the war years.¹²

Fishmarket porters ('lumpers' in Aberdeen and Grimsby, and 'bobbers' in Hull) were excluded from the EW (Dock Work) O but labour shortage in the fishing ports induced the Ministry of Labour to incorporate these workers under the same order. The only group of fishmarket porters in the major ports omitted from the order was the Hull workforce. Their employers in Hull (HFVOA) and their trade union, the National Union of General & Municipal Workers (NUGMW) had their own reasons for introducing a decasualised system of employment outwith the confines of an EWO. Crowther is of the opinion that the employers did not relish the loss of control over their work force, nor did they wish to see their employees acquiring a greater degree of bargaining power by way of an EWO:

"Under the umbrella of the NDLC the fish porters at Aberdeen acquired an additional bargaining strength. They could strike and ensure the fish was not moved. Prior to the NDLC, the employers in Aberdeen would be able to use "scab" labour to unload the ships. In the NDLC they could only employ registered dock labour and the registered dockers were not prepared to break their own strike. The lesson for the Hull fishing vessel owners was very clear. In order to retain control of their labour force it was necessary to develop their own private schemes."¹³

The acquiescence of the NUGMW was brought about by the HFVOA's decision to decasualise the employment relationship in order to meet more effectively the demands of wartime work. For the bobbers themselves it was generally agreed that they were reasonably paid

vis-à-vis comparative unskilled manual worker-groups. Moreover they were encouraged by their employers to take part-time work, outwith their normal working hours of 2 a.m. to 10 a.m.¹⁴ Another, and perhaps more important reason for the NUGMW to remain within a private scheme and hence outside a national, state-organised, employment framework, was that it had several thousand members working in ancillary fishing activities, e.g. fish-processing, and it did not seek to give encouragement to further encroachment by the T & GWU amongst onshore workers in the fishing industry.¹⁵

A major consequence of this agreement between the HFVOA and the GMWU was that the Hull bobbers, unlike their colleagues in the other main fishing ports, were not drawn in to the national system of employment under the auspices of the National Dock Labour Board (NDLB) which was established in 1947. A national scheme of employment of registered dockers was constructed on the basis of the EW (Dock Work) Order and wartime employment arrangements. The Dock Workers (Regulation and Employment) Act, 1946, brought into being the NDLB, which consists of representatives of employers and trade unions, four drawn from each side, with an independent chairman and an independent depute-chairman. Responsibility for the management of the labour force of the industry and registers of employers and employees rests with the NDLB and local boards. Hence control of the labour supply in the industry is with the NDLB and not with the employers.¹⁶

Following the passing of the Act of 1946, the National Dock Labour Scheme, as it was named, gave the dockers significant advantages in the formalised processes of collective bargaining and in the field of strategic decision making anent manpower policy, e.g. disciplinary issues. D.F. Wilson has commented:

"The Scheme was to be the instrument for governing the transition from casualism to permanent employment and the identification of the unions with decision-making was expected to bring industrial peace as well as greater efficiency in the ports. Arthur Deakin, Bevin's successor as general secretary of the T & GWU, voiced the mood of the times when he hailed it as a form of workers' control and a brave experiment.Even today (1972) the power given to the unions in jointly regulating recruitment, dismissal and discipline is unique in having its sanction by statute and it approaches the initial stages of industrial democracy advocated by the extreme left."¹⁷

In marked contrast to the dockers, their T & GWU colleagues, the fishermen, employed by the trawler companies, experienced in 1946 the termination of a national registration scheme and a return to casualism.¹⁸ For the dockers, as numerous observers have contended, there was a significant rupture of the patterns of dominance in the industry in the period 1941 to 1956 but for the fishermen there was a return to the traditional power relationships that existed before the introduction of the EW (Trawler Fishing) Order of 1943.¹⁹ Both Tunstall and Crowther are of the opinion that 1946 was a most important year in the history of the fishing section of the T & GWU.²⁰ Tunstall posed the question that:

".....though it is plain from the great vigour of their opposition that the owners were against the scheme, it is also obvious that some fishermen were benefitting from it. Why then did the men not enforce the retention of the scheme which, with the Labour Government in office, they could easily have done? Why did the union, which had been so much in favour of setting up the registration scheme, not object to its being dismantled?"²¹

In the discussion of this issue, Tunstall fails to contrast the major concessions given to the dockers in the form of the Dock Workers (Regulation and Employment) Act, 1946, and the National Dock Labour Scheme with, what we may term, the re-casualisation of the employment relationship between the fishermen and their employers.²² The contrasting circumstances of the two occupational groups represented by the same trade union, however, gives pertinence to Tunstall's question.²³

Before discussing Tunstall's explanation, and that offered by Crowther, of the fishermen's seemingly submissive acceptance of the re-imposition of casualism, an account of the imposition of the EW (Trawler Fishing) O, 1943, is necessary. In 1942, the T & GWU and other trade unions requested the Ministry of Labour to introduce an EWO for their fishermen-members employed by the trawler companies. For their part, the employers were of the opinion that the problems of the indiscipline and absenteeism rates amongst fishermen could be solved by placing trawler crews under 'Naval discipline'.²⁴ In a contemporary internal memorandum, one senior state official, a Mr. T. Whalley, who was given the task of drafting an EWO for the industry

offered the view that:

".....(labour troubles) would not be cured by strengthening the penalties for desertion and indiscipline: they must be overcome by putting the employment in the industry on a proper basis which would involve decasualisation and a revision of the existing form of (ship's) Articles. I said that I thought the arrangements which we were making for the docks would probably be a better model to aim at than those adopted for the Mercantile Marine as this would permit of separate schemes being evolved for the main fishing ports and also of exact definition of the scope of the schemes."25

This state official was convinced that the trawler companies would be hostile to any proposal for a radical change in the extant conditions of employment. In the same memorandum he commented:

"I am afraid that we shall not get the owners to negotiate with the Unions conditions which would permit us to apply an Essential Work Order to the trawler fleets unless they are told as the Dock Employers were told, that the matter is decided (in principle) and all that remains for them to do is to reach agreement with the Unions within the time limit. On the merits of the question I think it is clear that nothing effective can be done to increase the efficiency of the industry until the present system of employment has been abolished and proper arrangements have been made in conjunction with the men's Union for the manning of boats."26

Bevin was informed of the contents of this memorandum the day before (17.4.1942) his ministry received a request from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries that an EWO be applied to the trawler fishing fleets.²⁷

The Ministry of Labour could encourage employers and trade unions in any industry to set up an EWO through

voluntary agreements and if implementation on this basis proved impossible, the Minister possessed the power to impose an arrangement.²⁸

In another inter-ministry memorandum, copies of which went to the Ministers concerned, J. Whalley stated that the workers' trade union representatives were most anxious for an EWO to be applied to trawler fishing but that there would be strong resistance from the trawler owners. He expressed the opinion that an EWO would solve some of the problems of absenteeism, poaching, indiscipline and other misdemeanours of both employees and employers:

".....by providing proper machinery for deciding the ships on which they (the crews) will serve, the times and places they will attend etc., you have achieved something which cannot exist under casual conditions of employment and you have created two entirely new sanctions - (1) the possibility of prosecution for failure to comply with the conditions of the scheme: (2) the possibility of exclusion from any kind of employment as a fisherman.I should hope, too, that any scheme evolved would provide a sanction against the employer who failed to play the game, the sanction being that he would no longer be able to fish from the ports against the scheme of which he had offended."²⁹

Reactions to the proposed EWO were sought from the employers' associations in the main ports and the trade unions and trawler skippers' and mates' associations.³⁰ The former, as the ministry officials had anticipated, were vehemently against an EWO for their sector of the industry, whilst the latter informed the ministry that

they could welcome such an initiative since it would place fishermen on a similar footing to dockers and seamen.³¹ Whalley, in a memorandum to colleagues in his own ministry, and officials in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Scottish Office, argued the case for an independent inquiry into the issue:

"We were informed in writing by three Associations of Trawler Owners that each refused to enter into any discussion with the Unions on questions of improving the organisation of the industry, even on the 'without prejudice' basis.All the Unions have expressed themselves in favour of the proposal to put the industry on a basis which would permit of the application of the Essential Work Order. We were agreed that if the Unions replied in this sense the next step would be to inform the Minister that our Departmental discussions with the industry had broken down and that in our view there ought to be an independent enquiry into the position."³²

Thus informed of the intransigence of the employers, Bevin accepted his officials' advice and authorised the setting up of a committee of inquiry.³³ The Secretary of State for Scotland (Tom Johnston) in a letter to Bevin stated that he wished to see Professor Alexander Gray (a professor at Edinburgh University and a member of the White Fish Commission) as the chairman of the three-man committee. The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries also expressed his preference for Gray.³⁴ Johnston was in fact expressing the concern he shared with his officials at the Scottish Office, that one of the three members should be a Scot. A Scottish official wrote so to Whalley:

"If, however, the appointment of Gray should fall through it is imperative that one of the three members should be a Scotsman."³⁵

Gray was duly appointed and he and his two colleagues, one of whom was a director of Spillers Ltd., and the other an official of the Association of Shipbuilding and Engineering Draughtsmen, submitted their report to the Minister in March, 1943.³⁶ This report recommended the application of an EWO to the fishing industry but largely because of the resistance of the trawler companies, the Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order, 1943, Registration of Trawlermen, was not implemented until April, 1945. (See Appendix 7, p. 591 "Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order 1943, Trawler Scheme".

Two principal objects of the scheme were:

- "1. To secure the efficient and economical operation of British trawlers by the provisions of an adequate, regular and mobile labour force for the purpose of trawler fishings by undertakings carried on by trawler owners; and
2. To regularise trawler fishing by the continuous employment of trawler men and the registration of such men, of trawler owners and of British trawlers."³⁷

A national committee was established with four subsidiary regional committees; the former was made up of representative members appointed by the latter. The four regions were the North East Region (North Shields, Hartlepool, Scarborough, Hull and Grimsby), the Scottish Region (Aberdeen, Dundee, Granton and Newhaven), the South Wales Region (Milford Haven, Cardiff and Swansea)

and the Fleetwood Region (Fleetwood).³⁸ In each of the ports, a port committee was appointed from employers' associations and trade unions, e.g. the Aberdeen Port Committee comprised four members, two of whom were nominated by the AFVOA, one was nominated by the Aberdeen Skippers' and Mates' Association and one member by the T & GWU.

Regulations concerning the conduct of trawler companies and employees were an important feature of the EWO. Fishermen in the reserve pool had to report regularly to the owners' association office, they had to accept any employment on board a British trawler (within their occupational categories, i.e. engineer or deck crew), they also had to accept "any other employment for which (they were) considered suitable by the Port Committee". In addition they could be instructed to sail from ports in other regions. The rates of pay for men in the reserve pool (temporarily unemployed) were (a) skippers 15s. 0d. per day, (b) mates and chief engineers 12s. 6d. per day, and all other crew-members 10s. 0d. per day. The reserve pool funds were obtained through a levy on the gross sales of each voyage of every trawler registered under the scheme. However, the levy was chargeable as an expense of the voyage for the purpose of settling with the crew. Some 8,500 trawler fishermen were incorporated into the Scheme.³⁹

At first glance it would appear that the employment scheme established by the EW (Trawler Fishing) Order, 1943, was rather similar to the scheme formed by the EW (Dock Labour) Order, 1941, in that *inter alia* both schemes were

regulated by national and port boards, or committees, containing representatives of employers and employees with apparently dual control over the allocation of labour, and both groups of workers receiving "fall back" when temporarily unemployed. In reality, the port committees were dominated by the trawler owners and their officials. All the secretaries of the port committees were drawn from the port owners' associations and the administration of the committees was formally placed in their hands. A state official sought to explain in an inter-departmental memorandum why his minister (Bevin) had accepted this state of affairs, which reflected the prevailing pattern of dominance in the industry:

"The reason for which it was considered advisable to adopt the procedure in question was that the Port Trawler Owners' Associations were the only bodies in a position to check the claims of applicants for registration to have been engaged in fishing and had, therefore, been requested by the National Pool Committee to be responsible for the issue of registration forms."⁴⁰

With the exception of the T & GWU, the trade unions and associations, representing trawler-crew personnel, were quite small, port-based labour organisations with limited funds and they shared a history, of sparse successes and numerous defeats, in industrial disputes with the port owners' associations. In addition, they were frequently suspicious of the activities of each other's organisations within the ports. Moreover, there were

major differences in industrial relations perspectives between, say, engineers and deckhands and between deckhands and trawler skippers.⁴¹ Within the T & GWU, the fishermen-members who were few in number, compared with other trade groups, had far less power and influence than did the dockers who had representatives at the very heart of the decision-making at district, regional and national levels.⁴² The trawler crews possessed no power whereas the dockers with their industrial relations history and communality of interests possessed some power, albeit of a reactive, abstentive kind, which encouraged their trade union lay representatives and full-time officials to pursue their objectives with vigour.⁴³

Without exception, the trawler companies condemned the operation of the EW (Trawler Fishing) O and the port committees. One Scottish owners' association (Newhaven and Granton) refused to take applications for the register of fishermen.⁴⁴ All of the owners' associations at one time or another complained to the Ministry of Labour that the EWO was not tough enough to outlaw what their members considered to be the poor, indisciplined behaviour of their employees. A letter from the secretary of the AFVOA to the secretary of the National Pool Committee stated:

"I am instructed to inform you that the introduction of the Essential Work Order has not improved discipline in any way. Prosecutions for disciplinary offences, such as delaying ships and refusal to sail, have increased slightly over an equal period of time. Absenteeism is also on the increase by reason of the

Fishermen's objections to an Order which denies them the right of free choice of employment. Some of the cream of our Fishermen are now adopting this procedure."⁴⁵

There were similar letters of complaint from other associations and the BTF. Captain T. Woodruff, the public relations officer for the BTF, voiced frequent protests, on behalf of the members of the federation, concerning the failure to discipline recalcitrant fishermen.⁴⁶ These complaints, however, were treated with some scepticism by the trade unionists and state officials since sanctions could be applied quite quickly against disobedient employees. For example, a letter from the secretary to the FFVOA contained the following observation:

"I may say that so far we have not had any cases of absenteeism before us under the Scheme. Where a man on Ship's Articles misses his ship the usual procedure is to prosecute him in the Police Court. There is little or no delay in having cases dealt with."⁴⁷

A contrasting interpretation of the employers' attitudes towards the Trawler Scheme is given in an inter-departmental memorandum, written by an official in the Ministry of Labour:

"The employers only accepted the Trawler Fishing Order with the greatest reluctance and it is doubtful whether any serious attempt has been made to operate the Trawler Schemes effectively, particularly as regards meeting shortages of crews at one port by the temporary transfer of men temporarily surplus at their own ports. While it may be true that such temporary transfers would not have been popular with the men, it was not because of this that no serious attempts

to effect transfers have been made but rather because the trawler owners have taken a parochial, instead of a national, view of their industry and have been more concerned to maintain a surplus of men on the Register against possible contingencies at their own ports than to assist owners at other ports, possibly their competitors, to get to sea trawlers for which there were definitely no crews."⁴⁸

It has to be remembered that the employers' associations in all of the major fishing ports, with the exception of Hull, had had to accept the extension of the EW (Dock Labour) O, 1941, to cover their employment of fish-market porters (the men who discharge the fish from the vessels) most of whom were employed by the same associations. It may then have been the case that the employers saw the joint control of the supply and allocation of labour as an infringement of the managerial prerogative. It was the case that the employers on the commercial docks were also reluctant to accept the joint control of work.⁴⁹

In January, 1946, the BTF, supported by the HFVOA and the AFVOA submitted a lengthy memorandum to the Minister of Labour, G.A. Isaacs (Bevin's successor), which sought the abolition of the Scheme. The argument was made that with the ending of hostilities the reason for the Scheme no longer held. It was also claimed that the port schemes were "extremely unpopular" with both employers and employees, that the costs of administration were increasing rapidly and there were no compensatory advantages to be obtained by the employers. Transfer from ports, which had labour surpluses to those with

shortages, had caused resentment amongst fishermen and in some instances this vexation had led fishermen to refuse such transfer instructions. At some ports it had been impossible to send trawlers to sea within a few days of Christmas as men wanted to stay at home. In Grimsby this refusal to sail had meant that on December 26th there were very few trawlers at sea.

The employers were anxious to demonstrate that the Scheme was a source of irritation for both employers and employees:

"Observations already made will show how unpopular the Schemes are amongst both sides of the industry. We would stress that the fisherman is very individualistic in his outlook and does not take kindly to direction when such direction robs him of his age-long right to choose the vessel in which he will sail and the Skipper under whom he desires to serve."⁵⁰

Two months after Isaacs had received the BTF memorandum calling for the abolition of the EWO, he received a letter from Arthur Bird, the National Secretary of the Fishing Section of the T & GWU, in which he outlined the operation of the Scheme, the levy which varied from 1d. to 3d. in the £ on the gross sale of the catch, so that in effect his members subsidised their own out-of-work payments. He also pointed out to the Minister that the employers' associations were most reluctant to discuss the inception of a Pool or Scheme. Bird concluded his letter by making a plea:

"The Trawlermen are anxious to avoid going back to the awful conditions of poverty and unemployment which existed in the Fishing Ports between the wars and ask, through their Unions, that you, Sir, will receive a deputation

who will place before you their ideas of a future Scheme to coincide with the (Labour) Government's policy of 'Full Employment'."51

Shortly after this letter was received by Isaacs, a meeting of senior state officials was held with the object of drawing up a recommendation for ministers concerning the proposed withdrawal of the EWO. These officials, eleven in number, represented the Ministry of Labour, the Scottish Home Department, the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries and the Ministry of Transport. An official of the Ministry of Labour, G.W.J. Cole, chaired the meeting.⁵² After a long discussion, during which an official from the Ministry of Labour warned that the fishermen were not obtaining a reasonable share of the industry's prosperity and that if their interests were ignored there might well be a strike, another official, from the Ministry of Transport, entered the caveat that her ministry did not wish to see the industry return to its pre-war unorganised state, it was unanimously agreed:

- " (1)the Order was no longer necessary for the purpose for which it was introduced and that it could be revoked without fear that its revocation would lead to an exodus from the industry;
- (2) that three months' notice of intention to withdraw the Order should be given;
- (3) that the date on which the period of notice should begin to operate should be agreed between the Industrial Relations and Labour Supply Departments of the Ministry of Labour, and that the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries; the Scottish Home Department and Ministry of Transport should be advised of the suggested date."⁵³

Approximately one month later, a meeting was convened with ten state officials, representing the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, and the Scottish Home Department, and twelve trade union representatives, ten of whom were members and officials of the T & GWU, the other two being the secretary of the Aberdeen Skippers' and Mates' Association and the secretary of the GSFVE & FU.⁵⁴ The chairman of the meeting was an official in the Ministry of Labour, J.M. Glen, C.B.⁵⁵ The meeting was held in response to a request from T & GWU officials to discuss the question of a permanent employment scheme somewhat similar to the one operating under the EW (Trawler Fishing) O 1943 which the state proposed to revoke.

Bird, of the T & GWU, stated that the statements circulated by the BTF and port employers' associations were misleading in that fishermen were most anxious to see the continuation of an employment scheme which would be confined to registered employers and employees, restrict the number of inexperienced recruits, provide a wage when ashore and off articles, and payment for accidents and holidays. Bird argued that the workers envisaged a new employment scheme administered jointly by employer and employee representatives and not solely by the officials of the port owners' associations. W.J. Wastle, of the Grimsby branch of the T & GWU, also claimed that his colleagues desired the continuance of the Trawler Schemes or, if that was impossible, their replacement by similar

employment schemes. Claims made by trawler owners that the men were keen to see the revocation of the EWO were "ill-founded".⁵⁶ Bird's radical proposal concerning joint control of port employment schemes is in marked contrast with the views of the employers, who had first of all delayed the implementation of the EWO and who, throughout its operation, made numerous complaints about its failure to tackle problems of discipline, despite the fact that their officials had administered the port schemes.⁵⁷

From the chair, Glen stated that the Government was committed to the abrogation of work control regulations except in special circumstances. According to the officials of his department the fishing industry did not warrant this special status. He went on to say:

"The setting up of a permanent Scheme depended on there being a decasualisation problem and good will on both sides of the industry in the desire to overcome it. It was understood, however, that the Employers' side of the Trawler Fishing Industry was by no means converted to decasualisation and, therefore, the first step seemed to be to see how far the industry could get together in the matter."⁵⁸

Glen, who was a senior official at the Ministry of Labour, and the other state officials, recommended the establishment of a Joint Industrial Council (J.I.C.) for the industry as a necessary preliminary movement towards a permanent improvement in both terms and conditions of employment and in collective bargaining.⁵⁹ The only concession Glen and his colleagues offered to the trade union delegates at the meeting was the deferment for one

month of the statutory three months' notice of intention to cancel the EWO. The latter voiced their dissent and dissatisfaction with the decision.⁶⁰

In July, 1946, the Minister of Labour revoked the EWO and in consequence the port employment schemes were abolished, at the end of September, 1946.⁶¹ Trade union activists continued to demand an employment scheme in place of the defunct EWO. In Grimsby at a meeting of the GSFVE & FU, the members unanimously passed a resolution that they would continue the struggle for such a scheme. The secretary was told to write to the owners' association with the following demand:

"That there shall be a scheme somewhat similar in operation to the Essential Work Order to take the place of the said Order when it expires on 30th September, 1946. Primarily this is to safeguard the holidays with pay and some form of payment whilst men are unemployed."⁶²

Such demands were ignored by the employers; the short-lived registration scheme for fishermen was abolished and casualism was re-imposed into their employment relationship.

In some other industries, the application of an EWO had encouraged the movement from casual employment to secure employment, for example, in the maritime transport industry and the docks industry. In most cases this transition from one system of employment to another was characterised more by conflict than co-operation between employers and employees.⁶³ The National Association of Port Employers (NAPE) appeared to be as unenthusiastic as the BTF concerning the joint control of labour supply and allocation.

At the end of the war, NAPE sought to slough off the joint administration but a Court of Inquiry, under the chairmanship of Sir John Forster, K.C., decided that the dock labour boards should be jointly controlled largely because of the historical precedence of the port registration committee and the difficulties of administering a scheme in the face of the hostility of the labour force and trade unions.⁶⁴ NAPE continued for several years to advocate the need to restore authority and disciplinary power to the port employers and in 1955 a request was made to the Minister, Sir Walter Monckton, to remove all the trade union representatives from the NDLB and the local boards.⁶⁵

The Government appointed a Committee of Inquiry, under the chairmanship of Lord Devlin, then a Queen's Bench judge, which reported in July, 1956. In the report, which was critical of the employers' continuous reluctance to operate the scheme with the trade unions, the observation was made:

"The Scheme must now be regarded as part of the structure of the industry. It is no use threatening to destroy common property; threats of this sort act as an irritant and disturb the minds of moderate men without deterring the extreme..... The employers in the past accepted the Scheme as something imposed upon them but they have not welcomed it as the right and just solution. There can be no whole-hearted co-operation between the two sides if there is left the feeling that one side is still seeking a way of ousting the other."⁶⁶

For the employers, it was the end of their unsuccessful campaign to retain control over the supply and allocation of labour.⁶⁷

In contrast, fishermen-members of the T & GWU were, with the revocation of the EW (Trawler Fishing) Order, in an entirely different position vis-à-vis their employers and the state. Let us return now to Tunstall's views concerning the T & GWU's failure to prevent the dismantling of the fishermen's registration scheme and the return to casualism.

There are three elements in his explanation. First, he maintains that there was widespread resentment amongst the fishermen against the idlers who were attracted to the occupation when the war ended, men who only made occasional voyages and whose longer periods ashore were subsidised by the 10s. 0d. per day allowance. Tunstall argues:

"Thus the most conscientious men probably associated the registration scheme with a collection of idlers who were giving all fishermen a bad name. It was probably for this reason that many union-conscious fishermen were, in 1946, happy to see the scheme stopped."⁶⁸

Tunstall does not suggest, nor has the author found evidence to support the notion, that the employers deliberately encouraged the exploitation of the registration scheme, by selecting those men who were manifestly unsuitable for this arduous occupation in order to facilitate the disaffection of the experienced fishermen. It is much more probable that at times of labour shortages in the major fishing ports, the 'gate-keepers' to the scheme lowered the selection criteria by which men were selected for the job. There is a long history to the complaints,

made by experienced fishermen and skippers, concerning the abilities and adaptability of new recruits.

Secondly, Tunstall maintains that the trade union officials were incompetent and failed to protect the interests of their members at a crucial moment in the history of trade unionism in the fishing industry:

"Looking back, it also seems that a failure of the local trade union leadership was apparent. The union should, in the long-term interests of the fishermen, have taken steps firstly to get rid of the 'scally-wags' on its own accord, and secondly to maintain the regular fishermen in their early enthusiasm for the scheme."69

Thirdly, the fishermen's interest in the port employment schemes was diverted by what appeared to be more significant events and circumstances:

".....another immediate loss of interest in the Registration Pool was that the Hull industry was being overwhelmed by more dramatic events. In the summer of 1946 the British vessels were making big catches. So were those of other nations: Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic vessels began landing large quantities in Britain. There was a short stoppage over this in January, and in June the market became so glutted that some trawlers did not cover their expenses. This meant that the men, who were all paid on the net profits, received no poundage payments. With their basic rates already paid out to their wives they arrived on shore with no cash. Several crews signed off their vessels, and an unofficial strike ensued which lasted nineteen days."70

For Tunstall, these three factors - (a) the resentment of the experienced fishermen against what they saw as the abuse of the scheme by 'idlers', (b) incompetent trade union leaders and, (c) more significant disputationous and diversionary events, - explain the failure of the employees'

trade union representatives to prevent the annulment of the employment schemes. Given the fact that Tunstall was denied access to the relevant documents in the Public Records Office under the then fifty years closure rule concerning state documents,⁷¹ his explanation appears to be both plausible and perceptive. It has to be said, however, with hindsight, that it is an over-simplified account of the events in question.⁷²

One criticism of Tunstall's explanation is that it ignores the important issue of the control of the port schemes and the registers. Theoretically they were under joint control but, as the author has already pointed out, from their inception, the administration of the registers was placed by the state in the hands of the officials employed by the port owners' associations. Numerous complaints were made by the trade unions concerning the calibre, as well as the lack of experience, of men who were placed on the registers by the port owners' associations (see footnote 31, p. 381). The disaffection of some fishermen, to which Tunstall referred, may have owed more to the biased control of the port schemes than to the prevalence of idlers. Fishermen in all the major ports had long been exposed not only to the practice of employers signing on inexperienced men during industrial disputes, or at Christmas, but also to the high labour turnover rates amongst deckhands and the reluctance, understandable perhaps, of some men to sail to Arctic fishing grounds in the winter months.⁷³

The fishermen's perception of the return to casualism was shaped by their powerlessness to prevent such a decision from being put into practice. Tunstall fails to pay heed to the position adopted by other and smaller trade unions on the question of the EWO. The minutes of a meeting of the GSFVE & FU held on 8th April, 1945, record the committed support for the EWO:

"A report of the meetings held in London, Hull and Grimsby was given by the Secretary re the EWO. The said Order would come into operation on the 14th April, 1945, and as far as the members of the Union were concerned their interests, as far as possible, had been well looked after. It would be remembered that the said Scheme had been mooted as far back as 1943, and it was only after the hard work put in by the Trade Union side that the order would now be an accomplished fact. The Secretary was thanked for the work he had put in during the past 2 years on the proposal of Bro. Green T. and Bro. Sunlay."74

It is more probable that the members of the GSFVE & FU were more affected by their powerlessness to prevent the revocation of the EWO, some fifteen months after the above meeting, than by their disaffection at the abuse of the port scheme by idlers. An examination of this trade union's minutes books for the years 1945 and 1946 reveals no expressions of discontent. One entry, dated 3rd March, 1946, which appears to refute the allegations of idlers exploiting the pool payments states that some trawler engineers who were displeased with life at sea were actively seeking jobs ashore.⁷⁵

It may be that because Tunstall's study is concentrated upon the industry in Hull, he fails to consider the reactions of trade unions, other than the T & GWU, to the abolition of the port schemes. For example, the GSFVE & FU, the MHASTE & FU, the skippers' and mates' association in Granton and Aberdeen, protested vehemently to the Ministry that if the scheme had to be statutorily abolished, then it should be replaced by a similar one. The T & GWU's officials responsible for the fishing industry, also argued against a return to the inter-war conditions of employment. Tunstall appears to ignore the reality of the powerlessness of the trade unions when faced by both port employers' associations and their national federation (the BTF), and by the apparent neutrality of the state. The phrase "apparent neutrality" is used since the officials of the state departments and the political administrators concerned chose to remain neutral, when confronted by an unequal relationship between employers and employees, so that their neutrality was advantageous to the more powerful and disadvantageous to the less powerful.

Tunstall formed this opinion:

"(His) study makes it fairly certain that had the Hull fishermen belonged to a small independent union (and especially if strong local leaders had kept them in such a union) the structure of the occupation today would be different."⁷⁶

The notion of small, port-based trade unions winning more radical concessions from their employers and the state is conjectural. The extant evidence suggests that this kind

of trade union in Hull would not have been any more successful than, say, the engineers' union in Grimsby or those other trade unions in Scotland, England and Wales which merged with the T & GWU. The skippers' and mates' associations in all the major ports were small independent organisations but they were never able to constrain the managerial prerogative of their employers and their managers. The major reason for their powerlessness was that there were always more men with skippers' and mates' 'tickets' than there were skippers' and mates' berths. Thus the employers and their port associations established a pattern of dominance over their senior sea-going personnel that was rarely subjected to any kind of challenge.⁷⁷

In his criticism of the T & GWU and the remoteness of its national officials from the reality of the fishing industry, Tunstall offered the explanation that deckhands rarely became involved in the local trade union since the more ambitious were anxious to become skippers or mates and in any case, as Tunstall observed, they shared with the skippers and, to a lesser but still important extent, their employers, the values and customs inherent in the industry.⁷⁸

Tunstall goes on to say:

"The men get their information about the world of fishing from the trade press, which though intelligent and sometimes independent, carries a heavy weight of trade advertising. At Hull the owners, on public relations advice, have started another monthly paper - really a house journal. Thus all the general information which the men get has a strong bias."⁷⁹

This communality of interests, values and attitudes, along with an uncritical trade press, ought to have made the task of managing the work force less than difficult for the employers. On the other hand, these factors, applied with the numerous small trade unions and the lack of commitment to trade unionism, meant that the trade union activists and officials were faced with formidable problems when they attempted to gain a greater degree of formal job security for trawler crews.

The unofficial strike of fishermen in June, 1946, to which Tunstall referred, affected not only Hull but Grimsby, Lowestoft, North Shields and Aberdeen. Its immediate cause, as Tunstall observed, was the fall in total earnings which was brought about by a sharp decrease in the price of fish. The trade unions complained that the problems associated with a glut of fish at the market were exacerbated by the scale of landings of foreign vessels. To offset the problem of low prices for their catches, the men demanded that their poundage should be based on the gross value of the catch and not on the net value, which was arrived at after expenses had been deducted for the cost of the voyage. Another related demand on pay was that an increase should be given to deckhands and cooks of 7s. 0d. per week.

Some two weeks after the stoppage began, a resumption of sailings was achieved on the Government's promise to appoint a Court of Inquiry to examine the men's grievances.

Sir John Forster, K.C., was appointed to lead this inquiry which commenced in July.⁸⁰

The Court of Inquiry discovered on receiving evidence from the trade union representatives that there was no desire felt by the members to abolish the differences in earnings that existed among the ports (see Table 19, page 373 : Average Earnings for Deckhands for Each Week in the Six Months, January to June in 1938 and 1946). However, the court was informed of the considerable disquiet and resentment of the fishermen over the issue of charges on the settling sheets.⁸¹ (See Appendix 16, p.670 AFVOA Settling Sheet, 1979). The Report stated:

"It is clear from the evidence laid before us that the custom and practice in regard to fixing of wages and conditions of service varies considerably from port to port. For example, in some ports, payment of poundage to deckhands is based on the gross receipts, while in other ports it is based on the nett. Also agreements are in existence in all ports with regard to the items which are charged on the settling sheets against the gross receipts, but the nature of the items differ to some extent in each port. The industry has evolved from small beginnings at the various ports, and as is natural the original traditions of each port have to some extent continued with a resulting difference in the methods of remunerating both owners and crews."⁸²

The court rejected the claims of the trade unions for an increase in the weekly wage of 7s. 0d. and the poundage to be based on a calculation that all fish were sold at not less than 75 per cent of the first-hand controlled price, but recommended that the incomes of trawler crews should be placed on a more secure footing, i.e. that the poundage

TABLE 19

Average Earnings for Deckhands for Each Week
in the Six Months from January to June, 1938 and 1946^a

Deckhands

Port	Average Weekly Earnings for Deckhands in 1938	Average Weekly Earnings for Deckhands in 1946 ^b
Hull	£ 5. 8s. 11d.	£22. 8s. 3d.
Grimsby	£ 5. 8s. 6d.	£21. 0s. 0d.
Fleetwood	£ 3.17s. 11d.	£12. 0s. 0d.
Milford Haven	£ 4. 1s. 10d.	£14. 0s. 0d.
Newhaven & Granton	£ 4. 4s. 7d.	£14. 0s. 0d.
North Shields	£ 3.17s. 7d.	£15. 0s. 0d.

TABLE 20

Average Weekly Earnings for Each Week in
Six Months Period from January to June 1946

Skippers and Mates

Port	Skipper ^c £	Mate £
Grimsby North Sea	60	35
Deep Sea	140	91
Fleetwood	52	38
Milford Haven	88	63
Newhaven & Granton	57	45
North Shields	57	45

Source: *Report into the Circumstances and Causes of the Stoppage in the Trawler Fishing Industry*, HMSO, London, Cmd. 5882, 1946, p.7.

- a These earnings are for a seven day working week.
- b These differences are due to the higher income of the deep-sea fishermen when compared with the middle-water fishermen.
- c In 1946, the average annual income of a Hull trawler skipper was approximately £6,000.

should be based on the gross amount earned by a vessel's catch rather than on the net profit of the voyage. Another recommendation was that immediate steps should be taken to establish a National Joint Industrial Council for the catching sector of the industry.⁸³

These recommendations were welcomed by the trade unions as they had sought an NJIC for this sector of the industry for some time. Also, the recommended change in the poundage meant that even when the markets were depressed, the crews of vessels would obtain payments. Members who attended a meeting of the GSFVE & FU at the beginning of October, 1946, voiced their approval of the establishment of a Port Committee and the NJIC:

"The Secretary gave a further report on the formation of the Joint Industrial Council for the Fishing Industry and of the meetings held in London on matters affecting the basic wage and gross poundage. Meetings had been held locally with the Port Committees which had been set up under the JIC and progress had been made. Further offers had been received and considered and it appeared that generally speaking the outstanding point was the question of poundage to be paid on the gross settlement. Further meetings had been arranged in London and reports would be made at the next meeting.The Secretary's Report was accepted as very satisfactory on the Proposal of Bro. Worrell and Seconded by Bro. Nettleton."⁸⁴

The above meeting took place one week after the revocation of the EWO yet there is no mention of this event in the minutes. Nor was there any discussion of the disappearance of the EWO at the GSFVE & FU's Annual General Meeting held in December, 1946. The Secretary, in his annual report,

stated that there were 900 members in the union which was close to 100 per cent membership, that the overwhelming majority of members were in employment, that relationships with the Superintendent Engineers (managers responsible for engineers and engines) and the trawler owners were of the very best. One discordant note in his report was that they and the employers had failed to agree on the poundage to be paid on gross settlings. This matter was to be taken up by the recently formed NJIC and if no resolution were obtained by that body, the matter would go to the Ministry of Labour.⁸⁵

In Hull, an unofficial stoppage took place immediately prior to the revocation of the EWO. Deckhands and engineers signed off vessels in protest at (a) the failure of the owners to accede to demands made at the beginning of the year that were concerned with rest periods, extra crew-members, provision of bedding, etc.,⁸⁶ (b) the procrastination of the owners' association *vis-à-vis* the recommendation anent poundage made by the Court of Inquiry and (c) the impending annulment of the EWO.⁸⁷ Within three weeks, the employers gave way on (a) and (b) but they resolutely refused to make any concessions on the issue of an alternative employment scheme to the one created by the defunct EW (Trawler Fishing) Order, 1943.⁸⁸

Casualism, the employers believed, best suited their interests and, they continued to argue, it was a kind of employment relationship that found favour with the majority of the trawler crews. Some port owners'

associations were involved with the joint control of labour supply and allocation in their fish-landing operations and they had no desire to see the practice extended to their activities in the catching sector.⁸⁹ Tunstall provides us with a perceptive but less than comprehensive explanation of the somewhat reluctant acceptance of some fishermen and their trade union officials, of the re-imposition of a casual form of employment, which had had a long history in the catching sector and which was only briefly disrupted for approximately seventeen months by the EWO - induced port employment and registration schemes.

In other words, the power of the employers to return to casualism far outweighed the power of the trade unions and the fishermen to consolidate the provision of security of employment contained in the EWO. The circumstances of the fishermen at this time are in direct contrast with those of the dock workers who were continuing to gain concessions at the expense of the power of their employers. It has to be remembered, however, that the history of the two occupational groups is quite different and it is facile to place the blame for the failure of the fishermen to make similar advances to those of the dock workers on the trade union officials.⁹⁰ To do so, is to ignore the enduring patterns of dominance in the fishing industry and the powerlessness of the fishermen in their relationships with their employers and the state.

REFERENCES

1. Gaventa, in his study, emphasises the importance of the role played by historical antecedents in the contemporary economic, political and social circumstances of American coal-mining communities:

"The impact of industrial power in the late nineteenth century and the conflicts of the coal camp era in later years were forces formative to the coal valleys in the Central Appalachias. Between the 1930s and 1950s, the patterns of dominance continued very much as they had been established.there was little alteration in the fundamental relationships of power and inequality."

J. Gaventa, *op. cit.* p.125.

2. D.F. Wilson, '*Dockers: The Impact of Industrial Change*', Fontana, London, 1972.
3. J. Crowther, '*Decasualisation: Bobbing/Fishing, Unpublished Research Note*', 13.1.1980, with permission to quote.
4. This change in the employment relationship between the fishermen and their employers lasted for approximately 1 year and 5 months.
5. This rule prohibiting capricious dismissals was frequently ignored by the trawler companies.
6. Angus Calder, quoted in J. Crowther, *op. cit.* p.11.
7. Ernest Bevin (1881-1951), General Secretary of the T & GWU who became the Minister of Labour and National Service (1940-45) and Foreign Secretary in Atlee's administration (1945-51) was popularly known in the inter-war years as the "Dockers' K.C.". This sobriquet arose from his presentation of evidence, on behalf of dock-workers, to the Court of Inquiry into Transport Workers' Wages (usually known as the Shaw Commission after its Chairman, Lord Shaw of Dunfermline). A. Bullock '*The Life and times of Ernest Bevin*'. Heineman, London, 1960. Shaw and his colleagues were impressed with Bevin's oratorical skills with which he presented the dock-workers' case for an end to casual labour in the docks industry. The following quotation is taken from the minutes of evidence:

"I suggest that your Court cannot refuse our claim either on grounds of equity or of reason. If the captains of the industry who have claimed monopoly control for themselves, who have argued that we are not capable of taking part in control, say that they are unable to organise their concerns so as to give us work for a decent standard of life, then I say that they ought to lose their place.By whatever means they have got control, there comes with it responsibility; and if they cannot improve the organisation of industry then I say they ought to make way.

If your Court refuse our claim, I suggest you must adopt an alternative. You must go to the Prime Minister, you must go to the Minister of Education and tell him to close our schools, tell him that industry can only be run by artisan labour on the pure fodder or animal basis, teach us nothing, let us learn nothing, because to create aspirations in our minds, to create the love of the beautiful and then at the same time to deny us the wherewithal to obtain it, is a false policy and a wrong method to adopt. Better keep us in dark ignorance, never to know anything, if you are going to refuse us the wherewithal to give expression to those aspirations which have thus been created."

Minutes of Evidence, The Court of Inquiry into Transport Workers' Wages, HMSO, London, Cmd.9367, 1920.

8. D.F. Wilson, *op. cit.* p.94.
9. *ibid.* pp.94-95.
10. *ibid.* pp.94-95.
11. *ibid.* pp.94-95 and J. Crowther, *op. cit.* p.1.
12. Under the 'Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order 1305 (1940)' a National Arbitration Tribunal (NAT) operated a system of compulsory arbitration which remained in existence until 1951. Part II of Order 1305 made strikes and lock-outs illegal unless a disagreement between employer and employees had been reported to the Ministry of Labour and not referred by the ministry for settlement within twenty-one days. The NAT had the power to make awards binding upon employers and their work-forces. See A. Marsh, *op. cit.* pp.200-201.

13. J. Crowther, *op. cit.* p.3. Fish-market porters are the labourers who discharge the fish from the vessels.
14. *ibid.* p.4.
15. *ibid.* p.4.
16. A. Marsh, *op. cit.* pp.85-86.
17. D.F. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp.99.
18. At the end of the War there were upwards of 80,000 dock-workers, the majority of whom were T & GWU members whereas there were about 8,500 fishermen in the union.
19. See, for example, D.F. Wilson, *op.cit.* M.P. Jackson, *op.cit.*
20. J. Tunstall, *op. cit.* pp.239-244;
J. Crowther, *op. cit.* pp.5-9.
21. *ibid.* pp.240-241.
22. It should be pointed out that Tunstall contrasts the skilled and eloquent advocacy of Ernest Bevin, at the Shaw inquiry on dock labour in 1920, with that of two T & GWU officials representing fishermen at a court of inquiry (1946) and a parliamentary committee of inquiry. It is Tunstall's opinion that the latter compare most unfavourably with the former. (*ibid.* pp.255-258).
23. There is a criticism of methodology here in that Tunstall's discussion of trade unionism in the fishing industry is a little narrow in focus.
24. Ministry of Labour memorandum dated 15th April, 1942, *Labour Shortage and Lack of Discipline in the Trawler Industry*, File No. EM/9754/2/1942, Lab., 8, 497, Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, Richmond.

25. *ibid.* In 1947, the Government introduced the Established Service Scheme for the mercantile marine. This Scheme, which gave security of employment to registered seamen and provided a single source of personnel, replaced the Reserve Pool which had been established by an EWO during the war. Under this scheme, the labour supply was jointly controlled by the British Shipping Federation, the Officers' Association and the National Union of Seamen (NUS). A established seaman was given priority of employment, over an unestablished seaman, and he received a guarantee of employment, in the guise of a general service contract with the Merchant Navy Establishment Administration, or a company service contract with a particular shipping company. The ending of wartime working conditions and the formation of the Established Service Scheme in 1947 gave rise to industrial stoppages in the ports of Liverpool and Southampton. The strikes, even although they were localised in character, revealed the discontent amongst some members of the NUS who demanded a shorter working week, changes in the Merchant Shipping Act (those sections dealing with discipline) and the introduction of ship's trade union delegates. see J. McConville, 'The shipping industry in the United Kingdom', Research Series, International Institute for Labour Studies, Geneva, 1977.
26. Ministry of Labour Memorandum, 15th April, 1942. File No. EM/9754/2/1942, Lab.8-497. P.R.O.
27. *ibid.*
28. One of Bevin's biographers, Mark Stephens, observed:

"Under Regulation 58A of the (Emergency Powers) Act, Bevin found himself empowered 'to direct any person in the United Kingdom to perform any such services' as the Minister of Labour might specify. This gave him absolute authority over the lives and activities of every civilian in the country between the ages of 14 and 64. No man in peace or war had ever had such authority conferred upon him by a British parliament."

Mark Stephens, 'Ernest Bevin: Unskilled Labourer and World Statesman', T & GWU Publication, London, 1981, p.95.
29. Ministry of Labour Memorandum, dated 14th May, 1942, File No. EM/9754/2/1942, Lab.8-497. P.R.O.

30. *ibid.*

31. In a memorandum to an official (A.T.A. Dobson) at the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, Whalley confirmed that all the trade unions favoured an EWO to cover the fishing industry:

"Dear Dobson,

We have now had replies from all the Unions that matter on the question of the application of the Essential Work Order to the trawler industry. They are unanimous in wanting the order applied but only in the case of Aberdeen do they go into details. Aberdeen complain that the employers there are shipping in an excessive number of men without previous experience to the peril of the experienced men whom they represent."

Ministry of Labour Memorandum, dated 22nd August, 1942, File No.EN/9754/2/2942, Lab.8-497. P.R.O.

32. Ministry of Labour Memorandum, dated 19th September, 1942, File No.EN/9754/2/1942, Lab.8-497. P.R.O.

33. An indication of the employers' liability can be gauged from the contents of a letter sent to the Ministry of Labour by the Secretary to the HFVOA, E. Thrale:

".....the members of this Association have given close consideration to the proposal outlined at the Conference held at the Ministry of Labour (in July), and are definitely of the opinion that the application of an Essential Work Order to the fishing industry would not achieve any increase in the efficiency of the fishing industry, nor would it ensure any increase in the quantity of fish produced.I am to advise you therefore, that the Association finds it unable to subscribe to the Ministry's proposals."

ibid.

34. *ibid.*

35. *ibid.*

36. Appointment and Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Supply of Trawler Crews, Lab.8, 610, File EM/9754/2/1943, part 2, P.R.O.
37. *ibid.*
38. Some of these ports were not major fishing ports, e.g. Dundee, Cardiff and Scarborough, but they were included in the scheme as an administrative convenience.
39. One trade union official claimed that his members were providing part of the reserve pool subsidy since the levy was deducted from gross earnings. Reference Lab.8/1238, File 15825, P.R.O.
40. File No. EM/9754/2/42 (Parts I-IV) , P.R.O.
41. See R. Andersen, *op. cit.* pp.219-23 and J. Tunstall, *op. cit.* pp.210-240.
42. See Bullock, *op. cit.* pp.122-31 and R. Hyman, *op.cit.*pp.89-91 and M. Stephens, *op. cit.* pp.75-79.
43. See the discussion of trade union power in C. Crouch, 'Politics of Industrial Relations', Fontana, London, 1977.
44. File No. EM/9754/2/42
45. *ibid.*
46. *ibid.*
47. *ibid.*, Evidence for the FFVOA secretary's claim is provided by contemporary newspaper reports of court cases involving disobedient fishermen. For example:

"Two fishermen were sent to prison for 28 days by Milford Haven magistrates for refusing to join their ship. Both Joshua and Thorne (the two fishermen) told the court they had gone drinking."

Western Mail, 28th August, 1942.
48. *op.cit.* File No.EM/9754/2/1942.

49. D.F. Wilson, *op. cit.*
50. Memorandum submitted by the BTF, AFVOA and HFVOA to the Minister of Labour and National Service, dated 28th January, 1946, BTF Application for the withdrawal of EW (Trawler Fishing) O, 1947, File No.EM/9754/2/1942.
51. Letter concerning the 'Trawlermen's Pool Scheme' sent to the Minister of Labour from the National Fishing Secretary of the T & GWU, *ibid.*
52. Note of a Meeting held at 15 Portman Square on 29th March, 1946, to consider the withdrawal of the Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order, *ibid.*
53. *ibid.*
54. In December 1945, the membership of the GSFVE & FU was 600 members which represented a trade union density figure of 99.9 per cent.
Minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting of the GSFVE & FU 9th December, 1945. (Grimsby). Minutes Book for 1945, GSFVE & FU, T & GWU, Grimsby.
55. Trawler Fishing Schemes, Note of Meeting held at St. James' Square, on 1st May, 1946, File No.Lab.8/1238-15825, P.R.O.
56. *ibid.* p.2.
57. *ibid.* p.2
58. *ibid.* pp. 2 and 3.
59. *ibid.* p.3.
One of the main recommendations of the Committee on Relations between Employers and Employed (1916-1918), popularly known as the Whitley Committee after its Chairman, J.H. Whitley, was the creation of Joint Industrial Councils, joint district councils and works committees, each of these being connected so that there was a structure of industrial relations covering a whole industry. Whilst the last two failed to develop along the lines envisaged by Whitley and his colleagues, the JICs (sometimes known as Whitley Councils) were a major structural development in the collective bargaining aspect of industrial relations in Britain.
R. Charles, 'The Development of Industrial Relations in Britain 1911-1939, Hutchinson, 1973. London.

60. *ibid.* p.4.

61. *Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) (Revocation) Order, 1946.*

The trade unions which were informed of the Minister's decision prior to his announcement in parliament were: the T & CWU, NUGMW, GSFVE & FU, NUS, Aberdeen Skippers' and Mates' Association, Granton and Leith Trawler Skippers' and Mates' Protective Association, the Milford Haven Amalgamated Steam Trawlers Engineers' and Firemen's Union.

62. *Minutes of a meeting of the GSFVE & FU on 26th June, 1946.*

63. In an unofficial strike of British seamen in 1960, several shipping companies brought successful prosecutions against their striking employees, under the terms of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, which resulted in some cases of sentences of imprisonment. The Times pointed out:

"The men are angered not intimidated by the threat of gaol and by the thought of seamen incarcerated as a result of their part in the strike."

Times, 16th August 1960.

64. *Report under Paragraph 1 (4) of the Schedule to the Dock Workers (Regulation of Employment Act), 1946*, HMSO, London, 1946, p.13.

65. D.W. Wilson, *op. cit.* p.104, see also, M.P. Jackson, *'Industrial Relations in the Docks'*, Croom Helm, London, 1972.

66. *Report into the Operation of the Dock Workers (Regulation of Employment) Scheme, 1947*, HMSO, London, Cmd.9813, 1956, para. 33.

67. D.F. Wilson, *op. cit.* p.105.

68. J. Tunstall, *op. cit.* p.105.

69. *ibid.* p.241.

70. *ibid.* pp.241-242.

71. This period was subsequently reduced to thirty years which enabled the author to examine documents that were barred to Tunstall.
72. Crowther also argues that Tunstall's explanation is an over-simplification of the situation; Crowther, *op. cit.* pp.6-9.
73. In Hull, those inexperienced men signed on articles during the Christmas period, some of whom resided at Salvation Army hostels for the homeless, were given the sobriquet 'Christmas crackers' and those fishermen reluctant to sail in the winter months were known as 'fair-weather fishermen'.
74. *Minutes Books for Year 1945, GSFVE & FU, 8th April, 1945.*
75. *ibid.* 3rd March, 1946.
76. J. Tunstall, *op. cit.* p.252.
77. *ibid.* p.243.
78. *ibid.* p.242.
79. *ibid.* p.251.
80. *Report into the Circumstances and Causes of the Stoppage of Work in the Trawler Fishing Industry, HMSO, London, Cmd .5882, July 1946.*
81. This particular issue has a long history in the fishing industry, as the author has outlined in earlier chapters.
82. *op. cit.* para.25, p.10.
83. *ibid.* para.32, p.12.
84. *Minutes Book for Year 1946, GSFVE & FU, 6th October, 1946.*

85. *Fiftieth Annual General Meeting of the GSFVE & FU, Minutes Book for Year 1946, 5th December, 1946.*
86. *Fishing News, 12th January, 1946.*
87. *Fishing News, 26th September, 1946.*
88. *Fishing News, 15th October, 1946.*
89. Many of the trawler companies had trade union-management agreements, i.e. pre-entry and post-entry closed shops, (UMAs), with trade unions representing skilled and semi-skilled workers in their onshore ancillary businesses, e.g. vessel repair yards.
90. Tunstall was critical of the national fishing officers of the T & GWU, particularly those who came from other industries to represent the fishermen:

"My impression is that men who have not themselves been fishermen and have not been acquainted with the industry before, suddenly finding themselves representing fishermen, have great difficulty in appreciating what the occupation is like."

op. cit. pp.254-255.

C H A P T E R 8

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
AND MARITIME LABOUR LEGISLATION

C H A P T E R 8

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND
MARITIME LABOUR LEGISLATION

Between the early nineteen-fifties and the nineteen-seventies, the catching sector of the fishing industry underwent substantial structural change.¹ Whilst the near-water fleets of vessels, characterised by single-vessel ownership grew in number, the trawler-company fleets experienced, during this period of twenty-odd years, a continuous decline in the company-owned vessels, marked by a diminution in the number of employed fishermen and ancillary workers.² In the inshore sector, there was both an increase in the harvest of some species³ and the number of regularly employed fishermen remained stable.⁴

A number of causal factors shaped the decline of the large fishing ports in the period under examination. For example, there was a pronounced change in consumer preferences for fresh fish which was revealed by a fifty per cent decrease in per capita consumption in the period 1948 to 1971⁵ (See Table 21, p. 388, Fish Supplies Moving into Human Consumption, and Table 22, p 389, Number of Regularly Employed Fishermen: Selected Years 1938-1971). There were related changes in the fish retail distribution with both a continuing decline in the number of fish and chip shops and fishmongers (at the beginning of 1980 there were some 3,000 fishmongers in Great Britain, which represents a decline of approximately fifty per cent in seven years).⁶

TABLE 21

Fish Supplies Moving into Human Consumption

(lb. per head of population per annum)

UNITED KINGDOM

Fish	Pre-war	1948	1951	1955	1960	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971 (prov.)
Fresh, frozen and cured (wet fillet equivalent)										
Herring	21.8	28.7	22.0	19.0	16.1	15.9	16.7	16.1	16.0	14.7
Other	-	-	-	-	1.4 14.7	1.3 14.6	1.4 15.3	1.5 14.6	1.3 14.7	1.0 13.7
Shell Fish (edible weight)	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.9	1.1	1.2	1.1
Canned Fish (imported)	3.5	1.8	1.2	1.6	2.6	3.1	3.2	2.6	2.3	2.5
Total (edible weight)	26.2	31.2	24.0	21.3	19.4	20.0	20.8	19.8	19.5	18.3

Notes: (i) These statistics are based on total supplies moving into consumption and as such measure disappearance rather than final consumption, since it is not practicable to measure changes in wholesale and retail stock levels.

(ii) The figures include consumption not only in private households but also in institutions and catering establishments, and by H.M. Forces in the United Kingdom. Comprehensive tables of food consumption levels in the United Kingdom are published annually in the Trade and Industry Journal and in the Annual Abstract of Statistics.

(iii) More detailed estimates of the consumption of fish and other foods in private households are published in the annual reports of the National Food Survey Committee.

Source: Sea Fisheries Statistical Tables 1971: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, HMSO, London, 1972.

TABLE 22
Number of Regularly Employed Fishermen

As at 31st December of each year
(selected years 1938-1971)

UNITED KINGDOM

	England and Wales (a)	Scotland (b)	Northern Ireland	United Kingdom
	Regularly Employed	Regularly Employed	Regularly Employed	Regularly Employed
1938	26,062	12,976	342	39,380
1948	25,946	12,080	800	38,826
1951	23,705	10,934	550	35,189
1960	12,712	8,795	500	22,007
1965	11,064	8,057	480	19,001
1966	10,641	8,073	500	19,214
1967	10,110	8,057	508	18,675
1968	9,420	7,927	540	17,887
1969	9,397	7,696	550	17,643
1970	9,424	7,656	548	17,628
1971	9,454	7,897	547	17,898

(a) Prior to 1952 figures were based on information supplied by the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen. Since 1952 figures have been supplied by the District Fishery Officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

(b) Prior to 1961 Scottish figures were as at 30th November of each year.

Source: Sea Fisheries Statistical Tables 1971: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food,
HMSO, London, 1972.

Of more immediate significance and long-term consequence were the four fisheries disputes between the United Kingdom and Iceland which occurred during the period 1952 and 1976. This latter date saw the complete exclusion of British trawlers from what had become over a period of eighty years traditional, and heavily fished, fishing grounds. There was, too, the continuing depletion of numerous fish stocks throughout the North Atlantic. Also, the fishing industry, along with other industries, had to contend with the dramatic increase in fuel costs, which form a major proportion of total operating costs, as a result of the decision taken by the member-states of OPEC to triple the cost of oil in 1974.⁷ Moreover, UK membership of the EEC generated a number of constraints on both the industry and the British state itself.

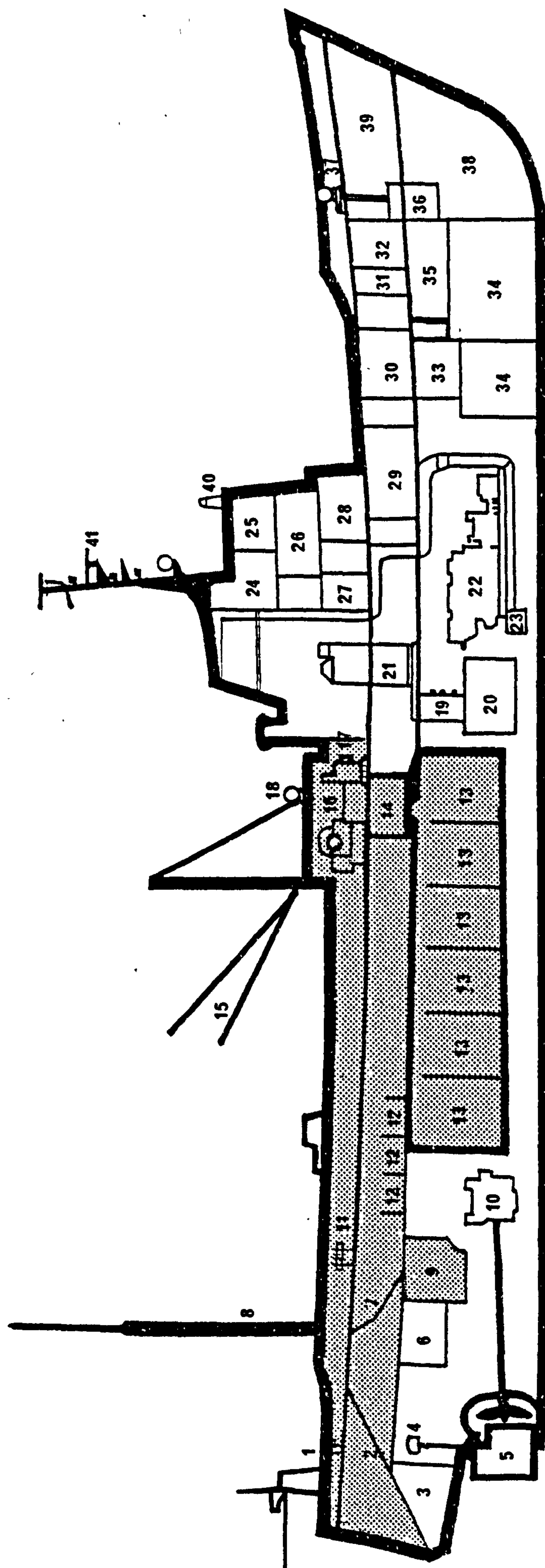
During most of this period under examination in this chapter, however, technological innovations in fish detection and catching equipment were adopted by the trawler companies in the construction of vessels. Ageing steam trawlers were replaced by motor trawlers, oil-burning vessels and diesel-electric vessels. Conventional design which was based on the side-trawler,⁸ i.e. shooting and hawling the gear over the side of a trawler were giving way to the large stern trawler even although side trawlers continued to be built up to the early nineteen seventies (see Figure 5, p.392, Cross-Sectional Drawing of the Stern Freezer Trawler *Victory*). These freezer-trawlers, containing large

fishrooms, with a capacity of around 500 tons, and refrigeration equipment can, as their title suggests, freeze and hold their catches at a temperature of, say, -20 deg.F. Unlike the conventional side-trawlers which can stay at sea for no more than three weeks, these large vessels can continue to operate for twelve to fourteen weeks (see Figure 6, p.393, 'Manning Schedules for Three Types of Trawlers').

Some understanding of the evolution of trawler design can be gained by contrasting the following quotation with the one in Chapter 3 (pp.162-163) anent the steam trawler *Euphrates*:

"The navigating bridge, with chart and wireless rooms on this level, is arranged for clear visibility aft from the console control position on the starboard side. The bridge (wheelhouse) houses the latest electronic equipment to be carried in this class of vessel. It includes magnetic compass, gyro finder, echo-sounders, fish-finders, W/T transmitters and receivers and direction-finding equipment. ... Conveniently positioned in front of the skipper's (swivel) chair are a Decca navigator, Simrad echo-sounder, repeater with Atlas monoscope, gyro steerer pilot and sound reproduction equipment control panel with loudspeaker over it. To the side and rear of the skipper's chair are the searchlight control, the main engine control box and instrument panels and one of the three engine room telegraphs on the bridge. The bridge trawl-winch controls are positioned to give the operator an unobstructed view aft through a fixed window with a Kent clear-view screen. The second of the three engine room telegraphs is close to hand. Great attention has been given to design and finish in the wheelhouse. For example, external doors and those of the wireless and chart rooms are in teak, whilst internal doors are in dark satin-finish plastic. The console and all other furniture are in light mahogany, again satin-finished, and table and desk tops are in mahogany plastic."9

FIGURE 5

Cross-Sectional Drawing of the
Stern Trawler *Victory*. a

1 Down haul winch	11 Hoisting winch	21 Composite boiler	31-32 Wash rooms
2 Trawl ramp	12 Fish pounds	22 Main propulsion generators	33 Oil fuel settling tank
3 Stern tank water ballast	13 Fish rooms	23 Lubrication oil tanks	34 Oil fuel
4 Steering gear	14 Halibut freezer room	24 Chart room	35 Food store
5 Rudder	15 Discharge derricks	25 Wheelhouse	36 Chain locker
6 Stabilisation tank	16 Electric trawl winch	26 Captain's cabin	37 Hydraulic windlass
7 Chute	17 Trawl winch motor	27 Drying room	38 Fore peak tank water ballast
8 Bipod mast	18 Fishing winch	28 Cabin	39 Store
9 Room for fish meal plant	19 Switchboard	29 Galley	40 Projection compass
10 Propulsion motor	20 Fresh water	30 Accommodation	41 Radar scanners, ship's lights, etc.

Source: Associated Fisheries *Victory* Handbook, Hull, 1964.
a: Built in 1964 at Aberdeen.

FIGURE 6

Manning Schedules for Three Types of Trawlers

Stern Freezer Trawler	Large Hull Side Trawler	Aberdeen Middle-Water Trawler
Skipper Chief Engineer 1st Mate Second Engineer 2nd Mate Radio Op. Third Engineer Bosun Fourth Engineer Factory Manager Ass. Factory Manager Deckhands (9 or 10) Cook Deckhand Learners(2) Ass. Cook (Galley-boy)	Skipper Chief Engineer Mate Second Engineer Bosun Radio Op. Firemen (2) Third Hand Deckhands (7) Cook Deckhand Learners(2) Ass. Cook (Galley-boy)	Skipper Chief Engineer Second Engineer 2nd Fisherman(Mate) Deckhands (5) Cook
<u>Total 24 or 25</u>	<u>Total 20</u>	<u>Total 10^a</u>

393.

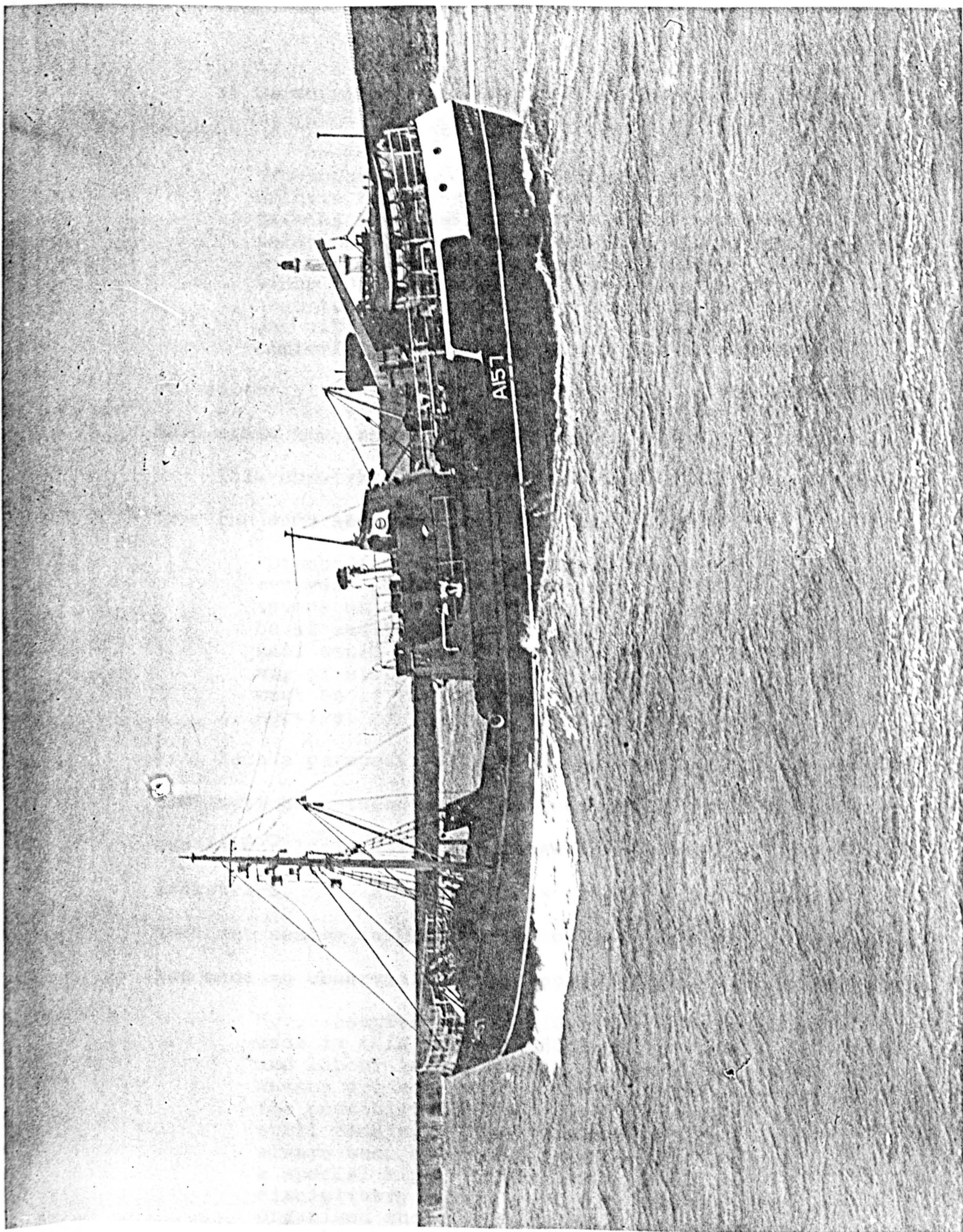
a If fishing to the north of the Shetland Islands, an extra deckhand would join the crew.

Source: A. Shepherd, Aberdeen Fishery Liaison Officer, T & GWU.
L. Godran, First Mate of Hull stern freezer trawler *Pict*.

Whilst working conditions are marginally less hazardous on a stern trawler than on a side trawler, the crew accommodation was given a much higher priority by trawler companies and the vessel designers (naval architects) than had been the case hitherto.

Amidst the numerous and wide-spread changes that overtook the catching sector of the industry, the casual employment relationship between trawler companies remained largely unchanged. So too did the laws governing the relationships between the employers and employees, and whilst at sea, the working relationships between skippers and crews. Those sections of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, appertaining to the crews of fishing vessels were not altered until the advent of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1970. During the passage of the Merchant Shipping Bill through the House of Commons in 1969 and 1970, T & GWU sponsored MPs were able to secure a number of amendments concerning the interests of fishermen but these had nothing to do with the issue of casualism.¹⁰ Workers in other industries, characterised by casualism, e.g. dock-workers and merchant seamen, had made significant advances in terms of job security and related conditions of employment but the fishermen and their trade unions made little headway in their dealings with their employers and the state. It is to the efforts, and their recent historical antecedents, of the T & GWU to de-casualise the employment relationship of trawler companies and their fishermen-employees, using as a model the NDLB, to which we now turn.

Aberdeen motor trawler *Aberdeen Progress* (A.157); built at Aberdeen in 1958 for Aberdeen Motor Trawlers Ltd. Dimensions: net tonnage 79, H.P.726.



Source: Photograph Aberdeen Central Library, Aberdeen.

In March, 1955, an editorial in the *Fishing News* stated:

"Throughout the industries of Great Britain few are so well conducted as fishing from the point of view of amicable relations between employers and employees. There has been no stoppage in fishing since 1946 and this is largely due to the negotiating machinery which exists to iron out difficulties of opinion between the employing and labour sections of the industry."¹¹

The editorial went on to praise the work of the industry's NJIC since its inception in 1946.

This observation contrasts with the following statement from the same newspaper several years earlier:

"Disobedient fishermen are a menace to everyone and their lesson must be as severe as the law allows. Let there be an end to paltry fines. A spell in gaol would appear to be the most effective way of stopping the rot. And stopped it must be if the fishing industry is to survive."¹²

Such a perspective ignores the existence of substantial distinctions between maritime industrial relations practices and labour legislation and those to be found in shore based industries. J. Kitchen in his study of the employment of merchant seamen in Great Britain in the twentieth century has made an observation that applies equally to fishermen:

".....despite the considerable advances made in this field (industrial relations and labour legislation), as far as merchant seamen are concerned, severe limitations on the possibilities for industrial action still remain.....The seaman's contract has always been seen as a binding agreement of a special kind, reinforced by a set of disciplinary rules which one suspects few organised shore-workers would tolerate for very long. Criminal penalties for disobedience, desertion, mutiny or absence have left little room for freedom to strike."¹³

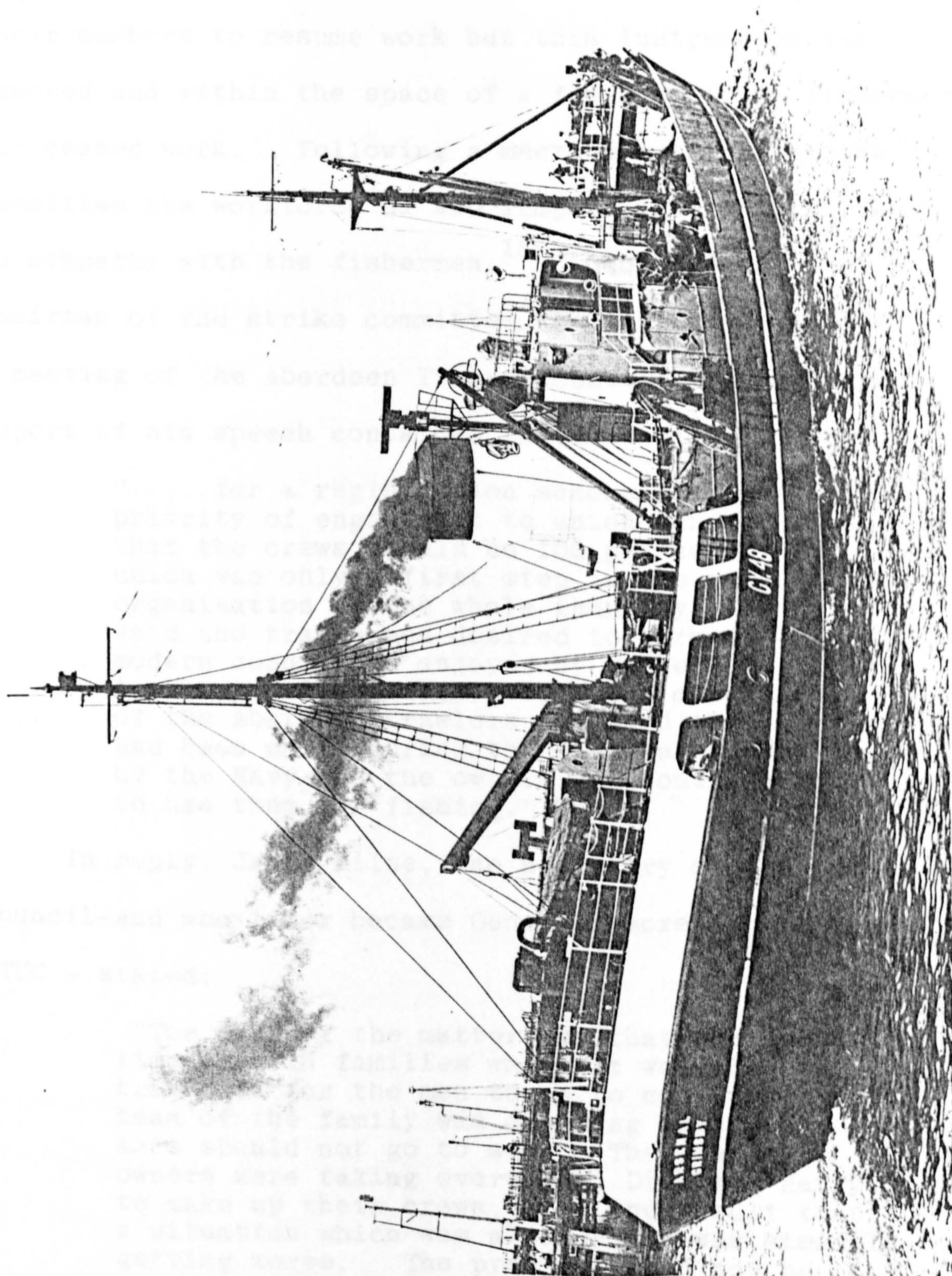
Supporting evidence for Kitchen's claim can be found in the *Fishing News* itself. Two weeks after the editorial concerning the harmonious industrial relations in the industry, the newspaper published an account of a case, in the Sheriff's court in Aberdeen, of a fisherman being gaoled for 28 days for leaving his vessel when it put into Aberdeen.¹⁴ Another court case involving "a disobedient fisherman" was published a little later in the year:

"Describing a fisherman's conduct as 'a piece of impudence' Sheriff A. Hamilton in Aberdeen Sheriff Court imposed a fine of £10 on deckhand A. Sim, 11 Ferrier Crescent, Aberdeen, who pleaded guilty for failing to sail with his vessel. Sim stated that he was not satisfied with the coal-bunker lids on his vessel but Sheriff Hamilton told him it was not for the seamen but for the owners to say whether a ship was seaworthy."¹⁵

Despite the deep distinctions between maritime and land-based industrial relations and the activities of the NJIC, industrial disputes involving collective action, were not altogether absent from the catching sector. In September 1955, an unofficial strike took place among the crews of Aberdeen trawlers. Within a few days of its commencement, 1,400 men were on strike and 140 trawlers were tied up.¹⁶ The strikers sought a registration scheme which would, in effect, provide the basis for a trade union membership agreement, under which all trawler-crew members below the level of skipper and mate, would be required to become members of the T & GWU. In practical terms this proposed union-membership agreement (popularly known as the 'closed shop') would become a compulsory element in the contract of employment.¹⁷

PLATE 10

Grimsby diesel-electric trawler *Arsenal* (GY.48);
built at Beverley in 1958 for Consolidated Fisheries
Ltd. Net tonnage 272, HP.1225.



Source: Fishing Archives, Grimsby Central Library, Grimsby.

The AFVOA refused to negotiate with the unofficial strike committee but offered to discuss a registration scheme with officials of the T & GWU once the men had returned to sea. For their part, the officials instructed their members to resume work but this instruction was ignored and within the space of a few days 1,700 fishermen had ceased work. Following a meeting with the strike committee the workforce of 220 lumpers agreed to strike in sympathy with the fishermen.¹⁸ George Wood, the chairman of the strike committee, was invited to address a meeting of the Aberdeen Trades Council. A newspaper report of his speech contained the following:

".....for a registration scheme giving priority of engagement to union men so that the crews should be 100 per cent union was only a first step in the re-organisation of the whole industry. He said the trawlermen desired to work in modern conditions enjoyed by workers in land-based industries.The condition of the Aberdeen trawlers was such that they had been unfit during the last war for use by the Navy and the owners had continued to use them for fishing."¹⁹

In reply, James Milne, the secretary of the trades council- and who later became General Secretary of the STUC - stated:

"The crux of the matter was that for some time past in families where it was the tradition for the men to go to sea, the head of the family was deciding that his sons should not go to sea. The trawler owners were taking every Tom, Dick and Harry to make up their crews, with the result that a situation which was already bad was steadily getting worse. The problem would not be solved until a balanced and efficient fleet was sailing from Aberdeen; yet the immediate prospect for new trawlers was five new boats. This was ridiculous in a port with about 200 trawlers, 75 per cent of which were 40 years old or more."²⁰

Milne in his speech made two significant observations, one concerned the employers practice of engaging poorly qualified and untrained recruits and the second in his criticism of the employers' failure or refusal to invest in new vessels. In the case of recruitment practices, the employers' position was buttressed by extant legislation, mainly Section 413 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, which states that fishing boats of twenty five tons or more cannot sail without a duly certificated second hand (or mate) but the Act does not specify adequate levels of training and qualifications for crew members below that level. Kitchen has observed:

".....it is worth remembering that the legislature has only seen fit to provide for competent leaders and assumes that the work-force will be both adequate in number and sufficiently obedient. One can only assume that to legislate for that work-force without agreement, even on grounds of safety, would have over-reached the boundary of unjustifiable interference in business, given that labour costs are primarily seen as the problem and responsibility of the entrepreneur."²¹

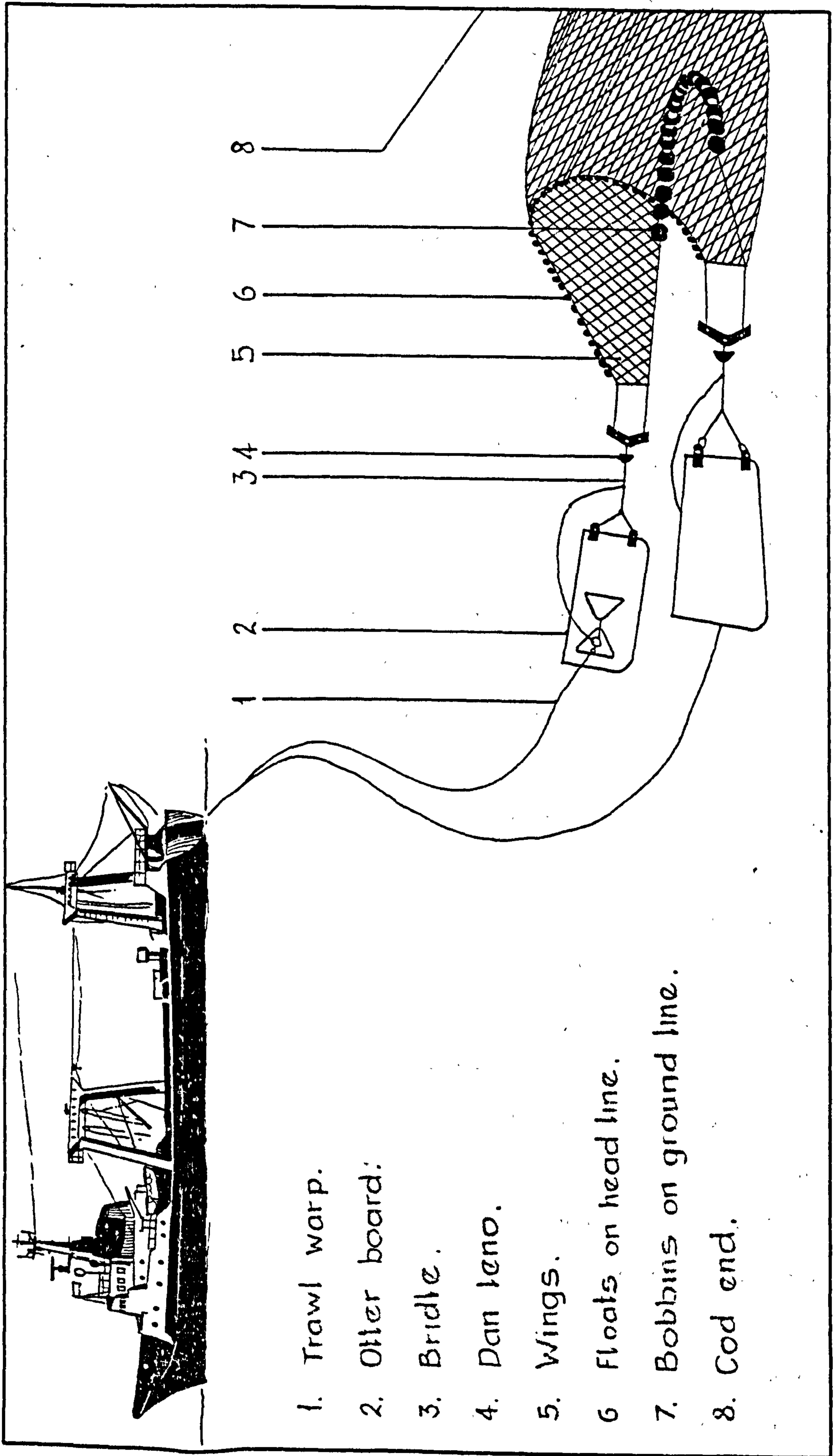
Whilst it would appear to be in the interests of the employers to have a highly skilled and adequately qualified trawler crew it nonetheless follows that if employers can sign on those without experience and qualifications, the absence of legislative constraints weakens the position of organised labour. The legislature, because of its refusal to interfere in maritime employment practices, enhanced the power of the employers and reinforced the powerlessness of the employees.²² In other words, there is a distinction here between the appearance and reality of the neutrality of

of the state in industrial relations; the reality of the state's position is that it favours the interests of the employer at the expense of the employees.

On the issue of the owners' reluctance to invest in new vessels, it is understandable why they were unwilling to do so, when one considers that the profitability of the companies had fallen away in a pronounced way and was never again to achieve the levels experienced in the period 1890 to 1920.²³ The problems associated with the replacement of ageing vessels were compounded by (a) the burgeoning fisheries dispute with Iceland,²⁴ (b) the resistance of the market to demands for higher quayside prices, (there is a substantial body of evidence which demonstrates that if fish goes beyond its traditionally low ceiling price then consumer demand switches to meat production; in addition there is in Great Britain consumer reluctance to transfer to fish species from cod and haddock) and (c) fishing quotas in areas of the North Atlantic.

The unofficial strike at Aberdeen lasted some four weeks, during which time the strikers had been the recipients of sympathetic industrial action taken by the lumpers, lorry-drivers and some other ancillary workers. Owners of small vessels from Peterhead, who had tried to take advantage of the strike by unloading their fish at Aberdeen, had had their vessels cast adrift and several Swedish herring vessels were prevented from landing their catches at the port.²⁵ A resumption of sailing was obtained by the AFVOA acceptance of the demand that "a registration scheme should be introduced at an early date".²⁶

Modern Stern Trawler with Demersal
Fishing Gear (juxtaposed)



In contrast to the favourable attitude of the *Fishing News* towards the NJIC, it appeared that this strike revealed a widespread ignorance not only of its activities but its existence, since the strike committee wrote a draft agreement which included the need for a Joint Consultative Council constituted to "deal with all matters involved in the daily work of the trawling industry".²⁷

In reply the AFVOA observed:

"The strikers in calling for a Joint Consultative Council do not appear to realise that since September 25th, 1946, there has been an Aberdeen Port Committee of the Trawler Fishing Industry NJIC and that this committee, which had its last meeting on August 24th, 1955, consists of representatives of fishermen, skippers and mates and trawler owners."²⁸

The lack of knowledge, concerning the NJIC and the port committee, can be partly explained by the difficulties in communicating information to maritime personnel but it could also be suggested that it reveals a failure by trade union officials to keep their fishermen-members informed of shore-based developments in the field of maritime industrial relations.²⁹ The registration scheme introduced by the AFVOA in consultation with the T & GWU officials, was administered by the former's officials and so bore little relation to the one envisaged by the strike committee. At the same time, the Aberdeen fishermen had displayed a much higher degree of solidarity than hitherto and had moved a little closer, than the fishermen in the other ports, to the realisation of a union-management agreement.

Both employers and employees continued to be affected by the fluctuating economic and political circumstances of this sector of the industry. In 1957, the Conservative Government appointed a Committee of Inquiry into the Fishing

industry, under the Chairmanship of Sir Alexander Fleck, K.B.E., F.R.S., which published its report in 1961. This report, known as the Fleck Report, stated *inter alia* that the profitability of the distant-water and middle-water trawler companies was of a very low order (see Table 23, p.406 'Average Profits and Losses of White Fish Vessels in Great Britain in 1957, 1958, 1959', and Table 24, p.407 'Numbers of Profitable and Unprofitable Vessels in Great Britain in 1959'). It was, however, pointed out by Fleck and his colleagues that some of the trawler companies made substantial profits in the processing, wholesaling and retailing of fish.³⁰ Hence despite the vessels' lack of profitability from time to time, ownership of a fleet of vessels could still be advantageous to those with land-based ancillary business interests. In addition, the report observed - as the author has discussed - that the trawler companies often had interests in associated industrial activities, e.g. ship's stores and gear, repair yards, vessel insurance, landing and discharging facilities, coal, ice, fish-meal and liver-oil.³¹

One observation in the report concerned the growing importance of political developments outwith the control of the trawler companies, developments which, as shall be discussed below, left these companies with as little power to influence events and circumstances to their advantage, as their employees were powerless to make significant changes in the employment relationship. The report observed:

"The distant-water trawler companies have always been regarded as a relatively prosperous section of the fleet. Although their accounts for the last three years show an annual loss, they made a profit of nearly £½ million in 1956, and until lately they had few problems that they were unable to solve for themselves. Recently, however, they have had to meet the threat of a contraction in the area of their traditional grounds as a result of other countries' claims to extend their fishery limits."³²

On industrial relations, the report noted that there were formal registration schemes in Aberdeen and Milford Haven, administered by the owners' associations, which had agreed to employ registered fishermen only. In practice, their officials controlled the registers and the trawler companies were free to employ whomever they chose from what were rather large registers.³³ The committee's conclusions and recommendations concerning changes in employment practices and industrial relations were that these issues were the concern of employers and employee organisations and not the state:

"Labour relations generally are harmonious and strikes rare. The accommodation on the older coal-burning vessels leaves much to be desired but these vessels are gradually going out of service and the coming of new vessels has brought a big improvement. After taking evidence from the main associations representing crews and officers and seeing for ourselves something of the crews' working conditions, we consider that conditions in the newer vessels are reasonably satisfactory and that changes and improvements in conditions of service, including pay, must be regarded as a commercial matter to be settled by industrial negotiation, except where the safety of the vessel and its crew are concerned."³⁴

TABLE 23
Average profits and losses of white fish vessels
in Great Britain in 1957, 1958, 1959

	Average per vessel					
	1957		1958		1959	
	Profit or loss (including subsidy)	Subsidy	Profit or loss (including subsidy)	Subsidy	Profit or loss (including subsidy)	Subsidy
Distant water trawler	£ -2,650	£ -	£ -1,329	£ -	£ -1,897	£ -
Near and middle water trawlers:						
Coal-fired	- 956	5,035	-1,716	4,872	-2,038	4,224
Oil-fired	+ 108	5,360	+1,871	5,219	+1,050	4,334
Motor	+1,205	1,606	+1,333	1,813	+ 853	1,650
Total	- 212	3,934	- 316	3,651	- 412	2,930
English seiners	- 257	631	- 626	651	- 36	794
Scottish inshore white fish vessels (including seiners) over 40 ft. long	+ 547	782	+ 567	775	+ 479	688
Scottish liners	+2,172	1,486	+2,499	1,546	+2,419	1,491

Source: Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Fishing Industry, Cmnd.1266, HMSO, London, 1961, p.35.

TABLE 24
Numbers of profitable and unprofitable vessels
in Great Britain in 1959

	Including subsidy		Excluding subsidy.	
	Number of Profit	vessels making Loss	Number of Profit	vessels making Loss
Distant water trawlers Near and middle water trawlers Coal-fired Oil-fired Motor	No subsidy paid:		107	141
	59	155	7	207
	14	12	5	21
	137	108	83	162
English seiners Scottish inshore white fish vessels (including seiners) over 40 ft. long Scottish liners	58	52	45	63
	326	147	255	218
	23	7	21	9

Source: *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Fishing Industry*,
Cmnd.1266, HMSO, London, 1961, p.35.

In his presentation of the T & GWU's evidence to the committee, P. Henderson, the national fishing officer, had emphasised the need for registration schemes and the decasualisation of employment :

"Being concerned as we are with the dignity of labour, we laid great stress on the need for registration of fishermen at all ports and the complete decasualisation of labour in the industry. Although labour/management relations are generally good, and in some cases excellent, there is still in some places the retarded mentality of the right to 'hire and fire'."35

The committee concurred on the harmonious quality of industrial relations but ignored the T & GWU's case for the abolition of casualism.

Where the safety of vessels was concerned, the report recommended that in the case of the larger trawlers, i.e. the distant-water trawlers, three certificated officers should be carried instead of two and that engineers on the larger trawlers ought to be required to hold certificates of competence from the Ministry of Transport but that a lower standard should be required of candidates for these certificates than the standards, established by the state, for Merchant Navy engineers.³⁶

No recommendations in the interests of, say, safety were made about reductions in the hours worked by both deck-crews and engineers. The former frequently worked for eighteen hours each day whilst the latter, with more regular and standardised patterns of work activity, operated a twelve-hour day in a working week of 84 hours. Tunstall was severely critical of the Fleck report for what he saw

as a serious failure to examine working conditions on the trawlers and for other failings in the report.³⁷

In a report he made to the General Executive Council of the T & GWU, the General Secretary, Frank Cousins observed:

"Our representations to the Committee have been virtually ignored and there appears little in the Report to justify the vast amount of work we put in."³⁸

The Fleck report apparently reflected the dominant perspective of state neutrality in matters of employment practices and industrial relations except where the safety of vessels and crews was concerned. At the same time, the report recommended that the existing system of grants (towards the cost of new vessels) and operational subsidies previously restricted to vessels of less than 140 feet in length, should be extended to enable the trawler companies, operating the larger vessels, to obtain state financial assistance for the acquisition of new vessels and to subsidise unprofitable vessels.³⁹ The period during which the state was to give this assistance to the trawler companies was to last not more than ten years from the date of its inception.⁴⁰

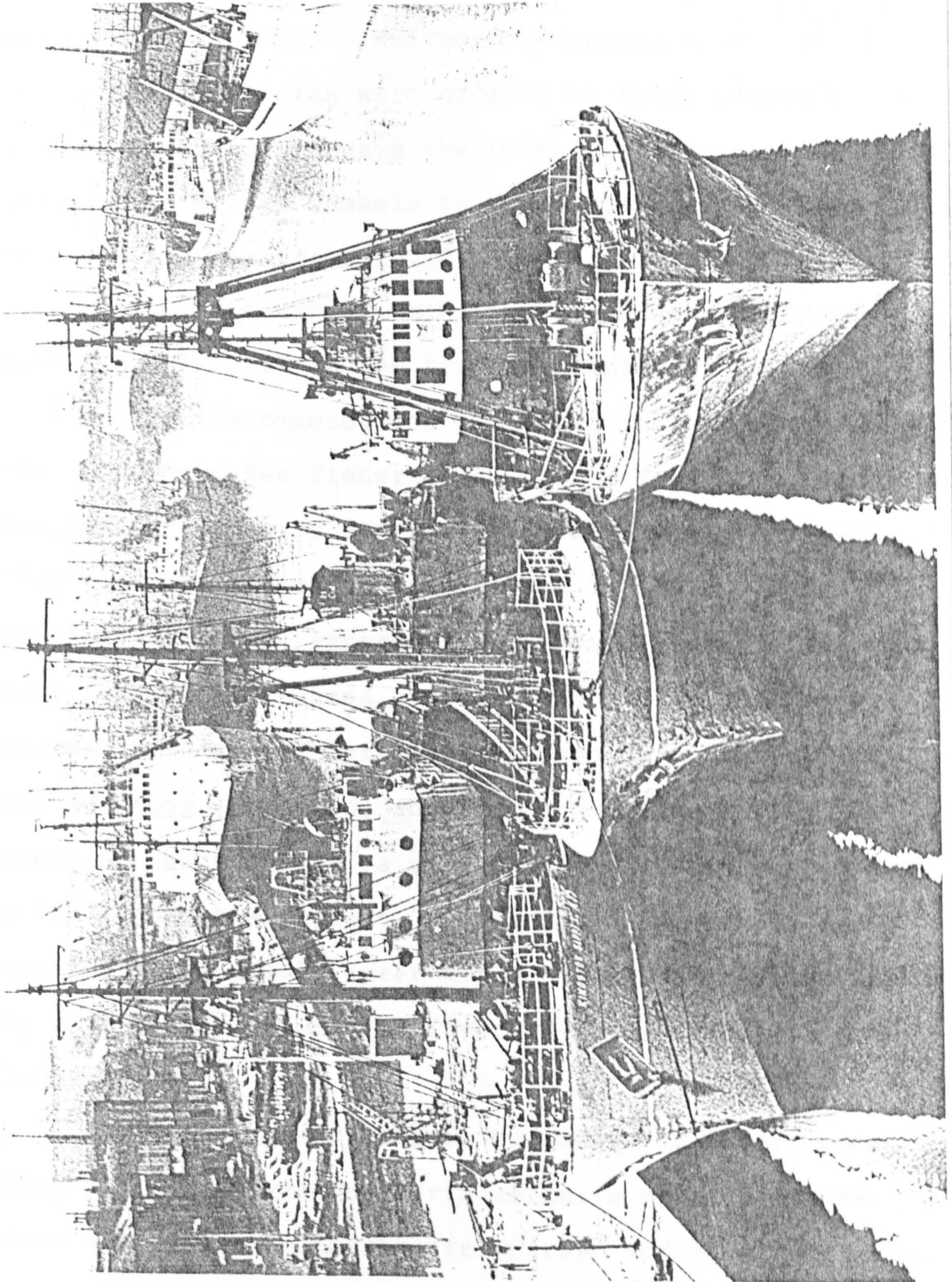
One member of the committee, G. Middleton, disagreed with his colleagues over the question of subsidies; in a note of reservation he stated:

"I am not averse to the payment of subsidies to the fishing industry nor would I offer opposition to the payment of subsidies to other industries where circumstances warranted such payment and the need for sound development was evident. However, the recommendation to subsidise the distant-water operators, and in doing so to include those firms who are not only prospering in the industry but proudly boasting about it, runs contrary to the whole idea underlying the provision of financial aid to any industry which is being helped to a viable future."⁴¹

410.

PLATE 11

Side and Stern Trawlers in St. Andrew's Dock,
Hull,
circa 1965.



Source: Photograph, *Hull Daily Mail*.

In the event, Middleton's reservation was ignored and the recommendation concerning the extension of subsidies to the trawler companies operating the larger trawlers was implemented in 1962. Whitmarsh suggests that capital and operational subsidies were offered to these companies as an inducement to increase the level of investment in the acquisition of new vessels to replace those that were obsolete and unprofitable.⁴² There were other factors, that will be discussed, which influenced the decision to give financial aid to the trawler companies.

Another recommendation contained in the report argued the need for a Sea Fisheries Authority for the UK to replace the Herring Industry Board (HIB), which was established in 1935, and the WFA which was created in 1951. This recommendation was ignored and it was not until 1981 that such a body was created by the state. The committee members were of the opinion that such an authority, as the one they envisaged, should concern itself with the whole of the industry, e.g. the catching, processing and retailing of the product. This would inevitably and necessarily involve, *inter alia*, the proposed authority in both general commodity advertising and research and development.⁴³

Fleck and his colleagues suggested in their report that decisions taken by North Atlantic coastal states, over extensions to territorial waters and fishing limits, were outwith the influence of the trawler companies which regarded such waters as their traditional fishing

grounds. At about the same time as the report was published, the British government announced that it had reached an agreement with the Icelandic government concerning the decision of the latter to extend its exclusive fishery limits to twelve miles from base ports (see Appendix 17 p.671 Map of Iceland showing the 400 metres isobar, the Existing Twelve Mile Fishery Limit and a Fifty Mile Limit).⁴⁴

It is not intended in this thesis to subject the Iceland-United Kingdom fisheries disputes to detailed analysis but the consequences of Icelandic efforts to restrict the activities of foreign fishing vessels around her shores to their complete exclusion had profound implications for British trawler companies, particularly those established in Fleetwood, Grimsby and Hull.⁴⁵

Under the Agreement, the British government withdrew its objections to the Icelandic government's decision to extend its fishery limits from four miles to twelve miles. In return the latter agreed to a phasing-out period of three years during which British trawlers were allowed to fish in designated areas between six miles and twelve miles amended base lines around the Icelandic coastline. (See Appendix 17 pp.671). During this particular fisheries dispute between 1958 and 1961, a Conference of the International Law of the Sea had been convened in Geneva and during the course of the conference, from 15th March to 26th April 1960, British trawler companies had acceded to a request from the British government to suspend all fishing activities in Icelandic waters.⁴⁶

The settlement of the dispute was hardly greeted with equanimity in the British industry. The BTF condemned it in a press statement which demonstrates its member-companies' views on North Atlantic fishing grounds:

"The area that is to be taken away from the British trawling industry and made the exclusive preserve of Iceland, whose total population is about 165,000, covers about 9,500 square miles equivalent to the whole of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire and Gloucestershire. What would be the reaction of the farming industry in this country if its richest agricultural areas were taken away from it overnight and given permanently to its Continental competitors?..... This agreement cannot be viewed in isolation. During recent years the industry has already faced successive losses of approximately 2,000 square miles of rich fishing grounds off the Norwegian Coast and the Faroe Islands."⁴⁷

In the House of Commons, MPs of all parties also criticised the settlement. Captain M. Hewitson, Labour MP for Hull West (within which constituency the fish dock and the overwhelming majority of ancillary industrial concerns are situated) claimed that:

"British fishermen would rather go into Icelandic waters with gunboat protection than sit down under this shabby agreement that will ultimately put them out of work."⁴⁸

C.A.R. Crosland (Labour MP for Grimsby and who as Foreign Secretary in 1976 was a signatory to an Icelandic-United Kingdom Agreement which ended British fishing activities in Icelandic waters) made a request that:

".....in view of the nature of this settlement, which was very much worse than the industry was expecting and which has dealt it a heavy blow, will the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries now expedite

a decision on the Fleck Report's recommendation that government aid should be extended to the distant-water section of the industry."⁴⁹

At the end of 1961, trawler companies that operated the larger trawlers were invited to submit applications to the state (via the WFA) for financial subsidies (See Table 25 p.417 'Financial Assistance Approved for Distant-Water Vessels - Cumulative Totals', and Table 26 p.418, 'Cumulative Totals of Grants and Loans for Vessels, Processing, Plants and Co-operatives, 1953-1980').

Problems surrounding the restriction of access to Icelandic fishing grounds were compounded by the decision of the Norwegian government to extend its exclusive fishing zone to six miles from April 1st, 1961, and then to twelve miles from September 1st of the same year. British trawlers were to be allowed to fish between six and twelve miles for a phasing-out period of ten years. At a meeting attended by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, the President of the BTF argued:

"We shall fight to the uttermost any further extension beyond the 12 mile limit - not another square inch. On April 1st trawlers have to observe a 6 mile limit off Norway which in 10 years will become 12 miles and 12 miles will leave us little of our fishing grounds in those waters. In Icelandic waters, in the short space of 3 years even limited waters between 6 and 12 miles will be closed for ever."⁵⁰

Amongst trade unionists in the industry there were expressions of reaction identical to those of the employers. P. Henderson, National Fishing Officer of the T & GWU warned against fishermen taking industrial action in protest against the settlement. He commented:

"The bitterness felt by our fishermen at all the ports - but primarily at Hull and Grimsby - is deep indeed. There is a good deal of pressure at local and national level for industrial action against Icelandic vessels and imports but we had to advise that this type of action could not resolve what was essentially a diplomatic problem between sovereign states. There is no sense in having our lads sacrificing their livelihood on an issue which is not susceptible to industrial pressures and which can only be resolved at diplomatic level."⁵¹

This view of the powerlessness of the trade unions, to influence the negotiations and terms of the settlement between the governments of the two countries, was not fully supported by the GSDFVE & FU and the skippers' and mates' associations in Grimsby and Hull, all of which threatened industrial action.⁵² Members of the GSDFVE & FU had earlier publicly announced that they were in full agreement with the BTF and that whilst talks were in progress between Iceland and the UK, Icelandic vessels should not land their catches at British ports.⁵³ In an editorial, the *Fishing News* expressed sympathy for the reactions of the trawler crews but criticised threats of industrial action:

"Trawlermen look at the agreement with Iceland and see not a diplomatic triumph, not a contribution to NATO solidarity, not an inevitable concession in the long-term interest but the loss for all time of a part of the open sea that gave a good return for their labour. The answer seems to lie in making the best of things as they are."⁵⁴

Following a joint meeting of the GSDFVE & FU and the GTOG, an announcement was made that:

"If a stoppage takes place, sailings will not be resumed until all charges against Grimsby skippers for alleged illegal fishing off Iceland have been withdrawn by the Icelandic government and all outstanding disputes with the Grimsby owners which affect skippers, mates and engineers have been settled by negotiation."⁵⁵

The GSDFVE & FU sought to combine the demands concerning the Iceland-UK agreement with claims for a) union-management agreement, b) engineers to be freed from working whilst vessels were in dock, c) an increase to seventy-two hours, from forty-eight hours, of the time spent in dock of distant-water trawlers and d) a wage increase in excess of one recently authorised by the NJIC.⁵⁶

In April 1961, the HTOG, GTOG and the GSDFVE & FU withdrew their labour. In Hull, the strike lasted five days during which time trawlers sailed with little disturbance since the striking skippers and mates were reluctant to picket the dock and T & GWU members accepted the instructions of union officials to disregard the strike calls.⁵⁷

For their part, the Grimsby trawler owners condemned the strike by their employees. The GFVOA pointed out that it was well known throughout the industry that the BTF had agreed that there would be no industrial action taken to prevent Icelandic vessels landing at British ports. This commitment to the continuation of the discharge and sales of Icelandic catches (known as the Paris Agreement) was accepted by the NJIC and the various owners' associations and had been made known to the trade unions, on a number of occasions, by the afore-mentioned bodies and MAFF.⁵⁸

TABLE 25

Financial Assistance Approved for
Distant-Water Vessels 1962-1980.

	New Vessels	Improvements
<u>Grants</u>	£	£
Cumulative total to 31st March 1979	14,393,458	2,330,533
Approved in 1979/80	87,820	277,871
	14,481,278	2,608,404
<u>Loans</u>		
Cumulative total to 31st March 1979	110,000	-
Approved in 1979/80	-	-
	110,000	-

Source: Annual Report & Accounts 1979-80, WFA, Edinburgh, 1980.

TABLE 26

Cumulative Totals of Grants and Loans
for Vessels, Processing Plants and Co-operatives

	Gross grants Expenditure	Gross loans Expenditure	Net loans Outstanding
	£	£	£
1953-54	163,719	182,169	177,829
1954-55	799,822	1,315,645	1,222,354
1955-56	1,698,114	3,324,914	3,074,608
1956-57	3,303,594	5,838,926	5,157,046
1957-58	4,508,190	9,433,652	8,022,056
1958-59	5,937,207	13,181,901	10,887,522
1959-60	8,787,843	18,682,815	14,880,850
1960-61	11,273,644	24,594,471	19,441,490
1961-62	12,735,371	28,841,817	22,032,074
1962-63	13,078,846	30,616,872	22,262,133
1963-64	13,267,769	31,306,626	20,695,064
1964-65	13,893,802	31,579,222	18,728,559
1965-66	15,283,112	32,276,621	16,985,300
1966-67	16,640,016	32,680,924	15,053,164
1967-68	18,538,335	32,949,544	13,778,129
1968-69	22,135,168	33,501,423	11,873,171
1969-70	24,184,525	34,220,630	10,484,846
1970-71	26,839,980	35,082,414	9,932,647
1971-72	30,323,876	36,178,879	9,219,584
1972-73	36,370,266	37,885,673	9,339,126
1973-74	43,014,707	40,331,208	9,888,102
1974-75	47,553,785	43,236,743	10,950,083
1975-76	54,024,194	47,110,823	12,757,928
1976-77	58,600,617	49,652,882	12,521,279
1977-78	62,952,226	52,573,574	11,807,012
1978-79	67,501,514	55,227,353	11,232,580
1979-80	73,470,614	57,032,657	10,525,394

Source: Annual Report & Accounts 1979-80, WFA, Edinburgh, 1980.

By the beginning of May all ports were operating normally with the exception of Aberdeen where the lumpers agreed to a request by the fishermen to ban Icelandic landings, but in Grimsby approximately 144 trawlers were tied up. The NJIC issued a statement which, *inter alia* advised the GTOG and the GSDFVE & FU to instruct their members to resume sailings :

"The NJIC wholeheartedly advises the parties concerned to withdraw the strike notice, resume sailing, and in an atmosphere of normality and goodwill, attempt to repair the damage done. Industrial relations have never been better of late and we are anxious that this should continue."⁵⁹

Both the GTOG and the GSDFVE & FU withdrew from the NJIC; they also voiced the complaint that the T & GWU "completely dominated" the workers' side of it.⁶⁰ In addition to the dissatisfaction with the T & GWU expressed by these two organisations, hundreds of disaffected deckhands broke away from the T & GWU during the strike and formed the United Fishermen's Union.⁶¹ This trade union, which claimed that about 1,400 deckhands and cooks had acquired membership in less than a week, declared an official strike both in support of the skippers, mates and engineers and for a wage increase. Over 400 members attended the meeting and unanimous support was given to the resolution calling for a strike.⁶²

The strike which lasted some six weeks and the formation of the breakaway union were roundly condemned by officials of the T & GWU. Henderson described the strike as:

".....the most stupid ever perpetrated. The strike started with a demand for a complete ban on Icelandic landings, plus the fulfilment of certain unspecified claims. The fishermen were never consulted. Today no one even mentions Iceland but a host of real grievances, real or imagined, which could have been settled in a civilised way without inflicting this terrible hardship on wives and families."⁶³

On Monday, 15th May, 18 vessels put to sea and by the following evening 41 vessels had sailed, out of a total of 176 that had been tied up. Following this successful action by some trawler companies to get their vessels to sea, the members of the GTOG broke their strike agreement with the GSDFVE & FU and agreed to return to sea, to recognise the Paris Agreement and to seek reinstatement with the NJIC.⁶⁴

The GSDFVE & FU and the UFU decided to continue the stoppage but on receipt of a promise to increase their weekly wages the latter agreed to return to sea forthwith. Within a few days, the GSDFVE & FU received a positive answer from the owners concerning some of their demands, i.e. priority of employment to be given to union members (in effect a union-management agreement), engineers to be freed from work-obligations when vessels were in dock, time in dock for distant water trawlers to be increased to 72 hours, to be put on the agenda of the next Port Committee meeting.⁶⁵ On receipt of this communication, the GSDFVE & FU instructed those members still on strike to return to work. A successful application was made to rejoin the NJIC and the union, along with the GTOG resumed membership of the council.⁶⁶

For its part, the T & GWU sought to prevent the UFU from obtaining formal negotiating rights *vis-a-vis* the GFVOA and obtaining representation on the NJIC. Efforts were also made by the T & GWU to restrict this union to the port of Grimsby. Earlier in the year, the T & GWU had had to create an Aberdeen Engineers' Branch in order to prevent the growth of a small breakaway engineers' union known as the Aberdeen Trawl Engineers' Association. In the Scottish port the union was quickly successful since, with the formation of an engineers' branch, most of the dissidents returned within a few weeks.⁶⁷

Formal negotiating rights were denied the UFU by the GFVOA which claimed that, as an owners' association, it preferred to negotiate with employee organisations within the framework of the NJIC.⁶⁸ Despite the constraints placed upon its activities, the UFU, which claimed that it represented 90 per cent of the Grimsby deckhands (1,600 members), made active attempts to expand its membership in other ports.⁶⁹ A branch was opened in Lowestoft with a former T & GWU activist appointed as full-time port organiser. At the opening of the branch, he told journalists:

"The T & GWU were wrong to oppose the Grimsby strike, a decision which led to the founding of the United Fishermen's Union. I also feel that the T & GWU is too big a body to cater fully for crews of fishing vessels - and has failed to give them a square deal in the past for that reason."⁷⁰

However, the T & GWU did not stand idly by even although the recruiting success of the UFU was something of an embarrassment to its officials. Cousins in a report to his General Executive Council observed:

"The breakaway organisation (United Fishermen's Organisation) in Grimsby has had some success, but the action we have taken has had the effect of isolating this body who are without recognition at any level. Our task is to now convince the fishermen at this port that this Union is best suited to represent their interests."⁷¹

In 1966, the UFU with a reduced membership merged with the T & GWU.⁷² In the same year an unofficial strike of Hull deckhands and engineers took place. The main demand of the strikers, who ignored the instructions of their officials to return to sea, concerned preference of employment for T & GWU members.⁷³ During the strike which lasted twelve days, approximately 1,000 men refused to sail; which action tied up 57 trawlers.⁷⁴ However, despite the pickets assembled by the strikers, the employers experienced little difficulty in sending vessels to sea. These strike breaking vessels were crewed by fishermen (members of the T & GWU and non-members) and officered by members of the HTOG who had no sympathy with the strike and who were hostile to the demand, which emerged during the strike, for a system of vessel shop-stewards or ship's trade union delegates.⁷⁵

An indication of the reaction of T & GWU officials to the dispute was provided by a Grimsby newspaper:

"Grimsby fishermen were advised by Mr. K. Wardle, the local Fishery Officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union, not to participate in the unofficial strike action which had been taken at Hull, and to continue to sail in Grimsby ships.Following representations from Grimsby trawler owners, Mr. Wardle advised all Grimsby fishermen not to take part in any unofficial action and to continue to sail. If they

were asked their views (by a delegation of Hull strikers visiting the port) they had, of course, every right to give them."⁷⁶

With the collapse of the strike a meeting was called by the unofficial strike committee but, out of the original total of 1,000 strikers, only five men were in attendance to hear the chairman announce that the strike was over and that they should seek re-engagement with their employers.⁷⁷ Shortly afterwards, one trawler company, Thomas Hamling and Coy., announced that the board of directors had decided to discontinue court action against thirty men for refusing to sail whilst on ship's articles.⁷⁸

A leaflet which sought to explain the reason for the stoppage was published by the strike committee and distributed after the termination of the strike. The claim was made that the strikers had sought one hundred per cent trade union membership amongst deck crews, engineers and cooks; in addition, they had sought to demonstrate to their employers that they were willing to strike for their demands and to their trade union officials (local and national) that they were dissatisfied with the union's failure to improve their terms and conditions of employment.⁷⁹ The leaflet also expressed the intention of Hull fishermen to form an effective trade union branch in the port. This last was not achieved and the local branch remained moribund.

Four weeks after the strike had ended, the employers in Hull announced that, following negotiations with T & GWU officials, they would give preference of employment

to T & GWU members. One newspaper claimed that this decision would raise union membership from 85 per cent to 100 per cent. The newspaper went on to predict:

"When this happens the T & GWU will be in its strongest position for 20 years to raise the fishermen's pay, to replace casual hiring with a central labour register, to obtain fall-back pay for the unemployed and to defend trawlermen against the high-handed behaviour of some skippers."80

Other changes in maritime industrial relations were sought by the T & GWU, one of which was the revision of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, which buttressed the power of the trawler companies and the skippers of vessels and perpetuated the powerlessness of crew members. The Assistant Executive Secretary of the T & GWU (J.L. Jones), who from 1966 became the chairman of the trade union representatives on the NJIC, said shortly after taking up this latter office:

"It is a time for big changes, to ensure that fishermen are treated as reasonably as other industrial workers. The idea that skippers should be judge and jury at sea, with the power to impose fines on the men must go. It is an outdated relic of the last century."81

Jones was not indulging in hyperbole when he complained about the power of the skippers and the powerlessness of their crews being compounded by maritime legislation. Similar patterns of dominance were to be found in the merchant navy under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894. McConville, in his book *'The Shipping Industry in the United Kingdom'*, states:

"This Act reflected its Victorian origins. A paternalistic stance in a master/servant relationship predominated throughout and seamen were viewed essentially as irresponsible and incapable of looking after their own interests; a contention which necessitated legislation to cover all factors which may affect a seaman's life often to his own discomfiture."⁸²

Kitchen and other maritime legal experts have called attention to the "separate and unequal treatment of seafarers which is perpetuated by the state",⁸³ in their examinations of British maritime law. The Act of 1894 with its powerful sanctions against disobedience, absenteeism, strike action, and desertion, was subjected to severe criticism in the nineteen sixties by the NUS and the T & GWU; but it remained largely unmodified until 1970 when it was superseded by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1970. There were other critics besides maritime lawyers of the 1894 Act. During the debate on the Second Reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill in December, 1969, one Labour MP, Emmanuel Shinwell, who had had experience of labour relations in the docks and maritime industries, observed that he had waited for 58 years to participate in the reform of the 1894 Act.⁸⁴

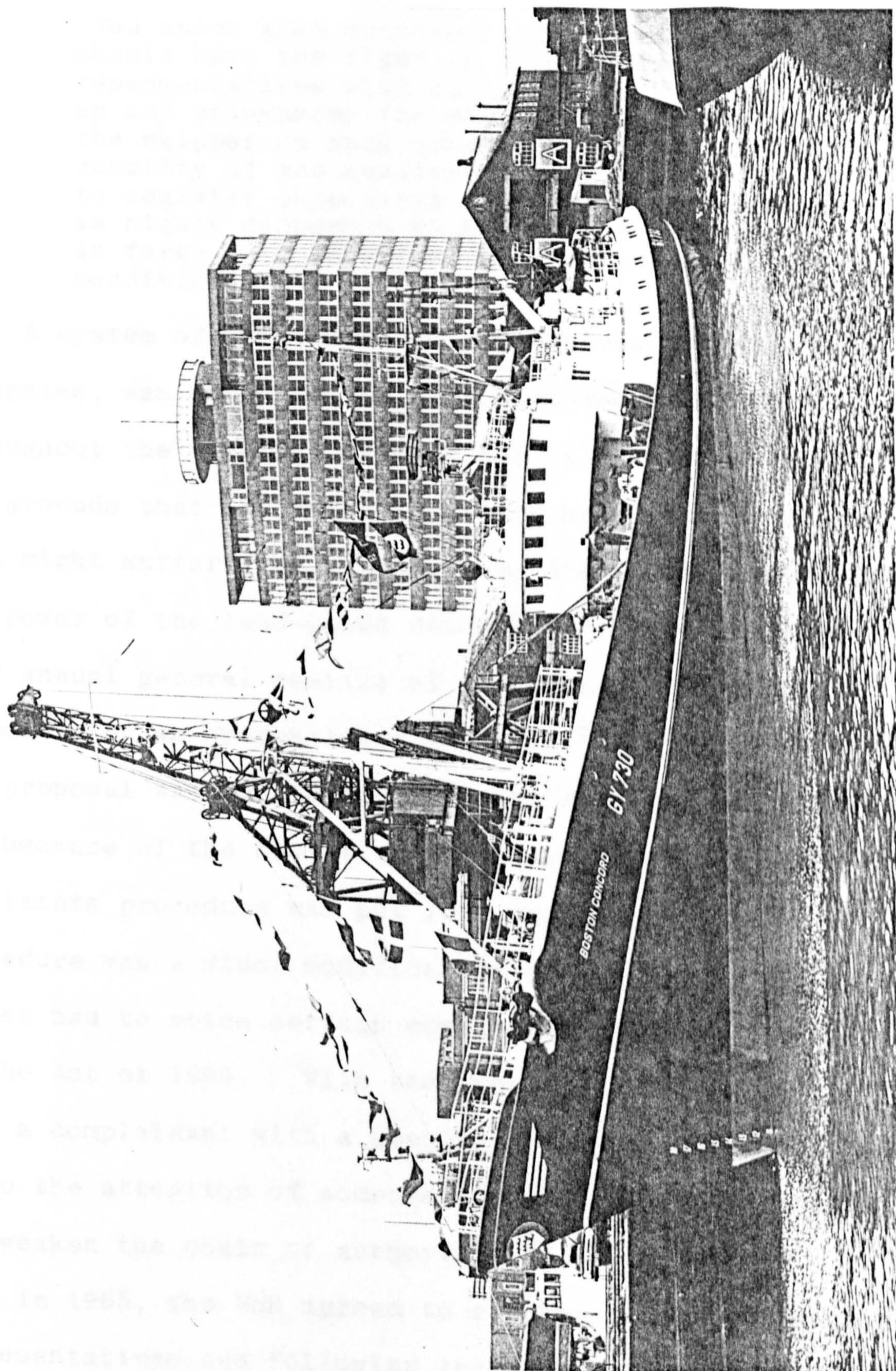
N. Lewis, a law lecturer of the University of Hull, commented:

"The Merchant Shipping Act (1970) has dragged the employment conditions of merchant seamen.....kicking and screaming into the nineteenth century."⁸⁵

Both the NUS and T & GWU were disappointed with the Act of 1970 since it failed to modify the structure of power relationships between employers, captains and trawler skippers and crews of merchant navy ships and trawlers.⁸⁶

PLATE 12

The Grimsby motor trawler *Boston Concord* (GY.730) built in Poland for the Boston Deep Sea Fisheries Ltd., Net tonnage 277. H..1800.



Source: *Fishing Archives*, Grimsby Central Library, Grimsby.

Another demand raised by Jones on behalf of the fishing section of the T & GWU concerned elected shipboard representatives:

"The union also consider that crews should have the right to elect union representatives with authority to take up any grievances the men may have with the skipper on such questions as the quantity of and quality of food, and also to register objections when ordered to fish in highly dangerous waters, for example in force 8 to 10 gales, or in black ice conditions."⁸⁷

A system of shipboard representatives, or ship's delegates, was advocated by radical members of the NUS throughout the nineteen fifties but it was resisted on the grounds that (a) union activists keen to take on the role might suffer from blacklisting and (b) it would weaken the power of the land-based union officials. However, the 1962 annual general meeting of the union adopted the principle by an overwhelming majority.⁸⁸ The next year, the proposal was put to the National Maritime Board (NMB)⁸⁹ but because of the hostility of the employers, a restricted complaints procedure was put into operation. This procedure was a minor modification of the formal right seamen had to voice certain complaints under the terms of the Act of 1894. With the procedure adopted by the NMB, a complainant with a genuine grievance could bring it to the attention of someone in authority but "it must not weaken the chain of authority".⁹⁰

In 1965, the NMB agreed to a pilot scheme of shipboard representatives and following the apparent success of the scheme, agreement was reached between the two sides to

extend the system to all vessels. Four years later, approximately 500 vessels had an elected NUS representative on board. On some vessels ship's committees of officers and seamen were formed and the NUS commenced a series of training courses for representatives and those members who expressed an interest in taking on the role of ship's representatives.⁹¹ In the nineteen-sixties, the T & GWU was less successful than the NUS in its attempts to bring about reformative measures in maritime industrial relations, and this despite the fact that the union's general secretary, Frank Cousins, was a cabinet minister in the period October 1964 to July 1966.⁹²

Kitchen contends that the state plays an important role in the maintenance of power relationships within maritime industries. This role which supports the employers is made manifest by both restrictive legislation which limits industrial action and the involvement of a department of state other than the one which is concerned with industrial relations and practices in land-based industries:

".....the separate and unequal treatment of seafarers is perpetrated by the administration of even the protective and industrial legislation relating to work at sea by a government department (the Department of Trade) other than the Department of Employment, indeed, by the department primarily concerned with the smooth flow of international trade."⁹³

In a Fabian pamphlet published in 1968, Tunstall argued that terms and conditions of employment were "a monument to the indifference of the Ministry of Labour",⁹⁴ (which was to become the Department of Employment). The inequality of the fishermen *vis-a-vis* their employers was reinforced,

TABLE 27

Ownership of Deep Sea Fleet in England and Wales

	As at 31st December 1978		
	Number of owners	Number of vessels	Cumulative percentage of fleet
Over 50 vessels	-	-	-
21-50 vessels	3	104	50
11-20 vessels	1	17	58
5-10 vessels	8	59	86
4 vessels	2	8	90
3 vessels	2	6	92
2 vessels	1	2	93
1 vessel	14	14	100
TOTAL	31	210	-

Source: Annual Report WFA 1978/79, Edinburgh 1979, p.22.

TABLE 28

Ownership of Scottish Deep Sea Fleet

	As at 31st December 1978		
	Number of owners	Number of vessels	Cumulative percentage of fleet
Over 10 vessels	1	16	18
5-10 vessels	3	24	44
4 vessels	2	8	53
3 vessels	-	-	53
2 vessels	1	2	55
1 vessel	41	41	100
TOTAL	48	91	-

Source: Annual Report WFA 1978/79, Edinburgh 1979, p.23.

Tunstall opined in his pamphlet, by the medley of ministries, all of which bore various responsibilities for the fishing industry.⁹⁵ He was also of the opinion that most of these departments of state viewed the industry as one of very low status. This was so even in MAFF and it was also the case with the T & GWU, within which fishermen made up less than one per cent of the total membership.⁹⁶

In the nineteen sixties and nineteen seventies, the trade unions and skippers' and mates' guilds dealt with what were primarily small-scale capitalist organisations, even although there was throughout the post-war period a growth in the concentration of vessel ownership. For example, in the period 1951 to 1959 there was a reduction in separate ownership of distant and middle-water trawlers from 240 to 156,⁹⁷ and this trend continued during the following decade. Tables 18, 27 & 28 pp. 327, 429, 'Ownership of Trawlers at the Major Ports in Great Britain in 1934', 'Ownership of Deep-Sea Fleet in England and Wales in 1978', and 'Ownership of Scottish Deep-Sea Fleet in 1978' respectively, show both a decline in the number of vessels and a growth in the size of the company fleets.

In comparison with the majority of land-based manufacturing industries, the fishing industry's rate of return on capital had been consistently low since the end of the 1939-45 war. This condition of affairs prompted the Labour Government to review its fisheries policy and this examination led, under the terms of the Sea Fisheries Act, 1968, to the operation of a new annual scheme of

subsidies to the trawler companies, with a maximum of £4 million per annum.⁹⁸ These subsidies were to be reviewed in 1970 but in the event they continued into the next decade.

In 1966 the proposed merger of two trawler companies, Ross Group Ltd., and Associated Fisheries Ltd. (A.F.) was referred to the Monopolies Commission under the Monopolies and Mergers Act, 1965.⁹⁹ As a consequence of the referral, Ross Group withdrew its offer but stated publicly that the offer would be renewed subject to the assent of the Monopolies Commission. Evidence was obtained from a wide range of organisations including the WFA, which was favourably disposed towards the merger.¹⁰⁰

Both firms had large trawler fleets; Ross Group owned 65 vessels and Associated Fisheries possessed 88 vessels.¹⁰¹ In addition both were actively involved in the ownership and control of ancillary activities, i.e. processing, cold storage, transport and distribution. The combined ownership of such a large number of trawlers (153) and the vertical integration of the two companies in onshore sectors of the industry caused much resentment and protest from smaller firms.¹⁰²

The Monopolies Commission Report was that the proposed merger of the two companies "could be expected to operate against the public interest."¹⁰³ The majority of the commissioners (six out of the total of eight) were of the opinion that the merged company with its large fleet and wide processing and distribution networks would possess

considerable power *vis-a-vis* the large number of smaller and less powerful companies. The majority of the commissioners decided that such power with the potential to exploit a near monopoly of the supplies of cod to the markets at the two Humber ports would be most harmful to the interests of numerous other companies in the industry. The Government accepted the findings of the Monopolies Commission and forbade the proposed merger of the two companies.

Regardless of the merits of the Commission's Report, both Tunstall and Whitmarsh criticised it for, *inter alia*, its superficial economic analysis.¹⁰⁴ A merger took place in 1969 between the two companies under the auspices of the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation (IRC)¹⁰⁵.

The *Observer* newspaper observed:

"The worst thing the Monopolies Commission ever did was to stamp on the merger of Associated Fisheries and the Ross Group. Even that might not have saved the trawler industry from collapse."¹⁰⁶

A new trawler company was formed, named British United Trawlers Ltd.. It possessed the largest fleet in Great Britain. It was the continuing decline of the trawler company sector of the industry which encouraged the merger of the two companies. Whitmarsh commented:

"Superficially it might appear that the IRC's active encouragement of an amalgamation of fishing firms not long after the Monopolies Commission had condemned such a move, reflected an ambivalence in public policy. It would be more correct to say, however, that it reflected a re-ordering of priorities in response to changing economic circumstances. In the two years since the Monopolies Commission reported, the profitability of most large trawling firms underwent a severe decline, and the likelihood of insolvencies was a real one."¹⁰⁷

In the midst of these worsening economic circumstances that were besetting the industry, the T & GWU continued to press for changes in the terms and conditions of employment of its fishermen-members. Complete decasualisation of dock-work had been achieved in 1967 in the docks industry with the government acceptance and implementation of the recommendations of the Final Report of the Committee of Inquiry into certain matters concerning the Port Transport Industry (popularly known as the Devlin Report after its chairman, Lord Devlin, an Appeal Court judge).¹⁰⁸ D.F. Wilson in his book on the docks industry commented:

"On 28 September, 1967, the port transport industry paid its debt to the early union leaders, to Beatrice Webb, Booth, Rathbone, Lord Shaw and Bevin. Casualism no longer existed and it remained to be seen if it could be torn up by the roots..... Gunter (the Minister of Labour), with due sense of history, welcomed D Day as the basis for new efficiency in the docks, greater union strength and more stable industrial relations."¹⁰⁹

Stability of industrial relations was not brought about by the abolition of casualism in the docks industry but, apart from the guarantee of security of employment, the T & GWU, with its participation in the NDLB and the local boards, was directly involved in strategic decision making in the area of manpower policies, collective bargaining procedures, and in the conflictual process of discipline. M.P. Jackson, in his study of industrial relations in the docks industry, observed that activists in the T & GWU have frequently criticised its officials and lay representatives

for their participation with management in the disciplining of its members in the industry's work-force.¹¹⁰

In spite of the intra-union conflict concerning the involvement of the T & GWU in the processes of management in the docks, the consequences of complete decasualisation were, *inter alia*, that the dock-workers had security of employment, guaranteed earnings, and nationally established 'fall-back' pay when there was no work to be done. Overall, there had been a substantial constraint placed upon the managerial prerogative and thus a change had occurred in the power relationship between employers and employees. It also meant that the dock-workers' section of the T & GWU was now enjoined in a relationship with capital and the state that was somewhat different from that which existed between other sections of the union, other trade unions and capital and the state.¹¹¹

There is a clear contrast between the terms and conditions of dock-workers and fishermen in the late nineteen sixties. As the author has discussed, the latter's employment was still characterised by casualism, their conditions of work and relations with employers and skippers being shaped by the Act of 1894. Whilst T & GWU officials expressed their determination to end casualism in the industry there was not at this time a clearly defined policy concerning the structure of employment relationships, except in so far as constant references were made to registration schemes under the joint control of employers and trade unions. There was an indication given that the

union leadership wished to implement an employment scheme which used the NDLB as a model and not the Merchant Navy with its MNB. The Aberdeen fishermen's branch of the T & GWU, had had, throughout the nineteen sixties, numerous discussions anent decasualisation, in terms of contracts of employment, fall-back pay when unemployed, guaranteed minimum rates of pay (to counteract the vagaries of the market) and a jointly-controlled register of fishermen (they did not appear to have discussed a jointly-controlled register of trawler companies).¹¹² These activists, however, whilst they appeared to be influential opinion leaders amongst their Aberdeen colleagues, received little assistance from branches in the other ports, most of which were moribund.¹¹³

REFERENCES

1. D.J. Whitmarsh, *'Technological Change in the British Fishing Industry'*, unpublished M.A. thesis, The University of Exeter, 1977.
2. Some observers are of the opinion that the employment ratio between fishermen and those in ancillary employment is of the order 1:3. However, in a document concerning employment in the fishing industry in Grimsby in 1977 the ratio is roughly 1:6

"The number of employees engaged in the fishing industry (the vast majority of whom are males) has been authoritatively assessed as follows

Crews	2,200
Fish Merchants, Staffs, Drivers, Cold Storage, Box Making, Central Landing, Tug and Ice Services	7,926
Ship repairing and other services	2,100
Total	<u>12,226</u>

These figures quoted above do not include employees of the British Transport Docks Board, private hauliers, extraneous personnel, town businesses and services (including local authority) which depend upon the work emanating from the Fish Docks."

'Grimsby: Its Future as the Major Fishing Port', Joint Statement by the Grimsby Borough Council, Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association and the Grimsby Fish Merchants' Association, Grimsby 1977.

3. Shell-fish landings in the same period of time have increased in both weight and value. For example, in 1964, the quay-side value of shell-fish landed at British ports by British vessels was £2,945,079; in 1970 the value was £6,727,051; in 1973 £12,852,608; in 1975 £13,613,664, and in 1976, when the total landed had increased from 67,406 metric tons, in the previous year, to 82,023 tons, the value was £23,106,065 (WFA Annual Reports). It should be pointed out, however, that this form of fishing is the province of the inshore (or near-water) fishing vessels, with no involvement by the trawler companies.

4. Employment of fishermen in Scotland has been much more stable in recent years than in England. The explanation for this difference in employment pattern is to be found in the structure of the Scottish catching sector of the industry with its predominance of smaller vessels under single-ownership in often quite remote communities. *'Employment in the Fishing Industry of Great Britain'*, Fishery Economics Research Unit, WFA, Edinburgh, 1975.
5. D.J. Whitmarsh, *op.cit.* p.59.
6. *'The Marketing of Fish'*, MAFF, London, July 1981, p.6. The failure of the industry to promote its products will be discussed in the next chapter.
7. Fishing is more dependent upon oil than any other primary food industry. Within the catching sector there are considerable differences in fuel costs but they form a substantial proportion of the larger vessels' variable costs. For example, in 1976 fuel-oil represented over twenty per cent of the total variable costs of the large side trawlers and the freezer-trawlers. *'Case for Aid for Restructuring Catching Sector'*, Fishery Economics Research Unit, WFA, 1977, Appendix 1, p.10.
8. This type of trawler, the side trawler, was known amongst Hull fishermen as a 'side-winder'. Several fishermen interviewed by the author claimed that this label was not derived from the American rattlesnake (*Crotalus cerastes*) but from American 'Western' films meaning a treacherous character. Other informants said, however, that it was self-explanatory, i.e. the gear is wound over the side when hauling it in.
9. Associated Fisheries Victory publicity brochure designed and produced by Adstral Public Relations, Limited, for Associated Fisheries, 1964.
10. J. Ellis and R.W. Johnson, *'Members from the Unions'*, Fabian Research Series, No.316, The Fabian Society, London, 1974, pp.16-18.
11. Merchant seamen were subjected to constraints on industrial relations and collective action by successive Merchant Shipping Acts. It was the case that, unlike the T & GWU, the seamen's trade union (the National Union of Seamen) had no sponsored MP between 1894, when its leader, Havelock Wilson was an MP, and the General Election of 1970, when John Prescott became the NUS-sponsored MP for a Hull constituency. By then, of course, the Merchant Shipping Bill had received the Royal Assent (19th May, 1970).

12. *Fishing News*, 4th March, 1955.
13. *Fishing News*, 26th October, 1946.
14. J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.320.
15. *Fishing News*, 25th March, 1955.
16. *Fishing News*, 10th June, 1955.
17. *Fishing News*, 9th September, 1955.
18. See A. Marsh, *op.cit.* pp.324-325.
19. *Fishing News*, 16th September, 1955.
20. *ibid.*
21. *ibid.*
22. J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.114.
23. This issue will be discussed later in this chapter.
24. In 1955, the decision by the Icelandic Government to extend Icelandic fishery limits was cited by a number of British trawler skippers as the major cause for the loss of the Hull trawlers *Lorella* and *Roderigo* which foundered with the loss of all hands (forty men) some miles off the north coast of Iceland. It was argued, albeit in a speculative way, that because of the extension of limits, the two trawlers were fishing too far away from the lee of the land to take shelter when they encountered severe weather conditions which caused both vessels to capsize. (*Fishing News*, 4th and 11th February, 1955). The Grimsby Trawler Officers' Guild and the T & GWU publicly dissociated themselves from this accusation (*Fishing News*, 18th February, 1955).

25. *Fishing News*, 23rd September, 1955.
26. *Fishing News*, 7th October, 1955.
27. *Fishing News*, 17th September, 1955.
28. *Fishing News*, 23rd September, 1955.
29. Land-based trade union officials in maritime industries are placed in a more powerful position, *vis-a-vis* activists on board vessels, to determine trade union policies, procedures and practices. One of the demands made by members of the NUS during unofficial stoppages in 1960, was the democratic reform of their trade union. The strikers sought both to restrict the power of officials and extend the influence of lay representatives. See J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* pp.284-295.
30. *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Fishing Industry*, HMSO, Cmnd.1266, London, 1961, para.60, p.38.
31. *ibid.* para.69, p.38.
32. *ibid.* para.71, p.39.
33. *ibid.* para.108, p.52. In Grimsby, members of the engineers' union had campaigned for some years for a registration scheme that would have to be administered by the GFVOA but would be restricted to *bona fide* trade unionists. At a branch meeting in April, 1959, it was unanimously agreed that the main objective should be that:

"After the commencement of the Scheme priority of engagement will be given by the Trawler Owners' Association to registered trawl fishermen, members of an appropriate organisation and to men precluded on the ground of conscience from joining such an organisation. It is agreed that without reservation such men will be treated in relation to employment as if they were members of appropriate organisations and that no attempts will be made to coerce or victimise them in any way."

Minutes of a meeting held on 5th April, 1959, Minutes Book for 1959, GSDFVE & FU, Grimsby.

34. *op.cit.* para 110, p.52. It ought to be pointed out that none of the committee members went to sea in a fishing vessel during the existence of the committee (1957-1961); hence the observation anent the knowledge gained of working conditions has to be treated with circumspection.
35. *Fishing News*, 6th January, 1961.
36. *op.cit.* para.111, p.52.
37. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* pp.287-289.
38. *Minutes & Record of the General Executive Council and the Finance & General Purposes Committee of the T & GWU, Vol.XLIV*, Transport House, London, 1961, p.186.
39. *op.cit.* para.340, p.148.
40. *ibid.* para.369, p.159.
41. *ibid.* p.173.
42. D.J. Whitmarsh, *op.cit.* pp.91-102.
43. *op.cit.* pp.161-166.
44. *Exchange of Notes Between the United Kingdom and Iceland*, Cmnd.1328, HMSO, 11th March, 1961.
45. The Icelandic state announced its intention to acquire exclusive control of the Icelandic continental shelf with the enactment of the *Law Concerning the Scientific Conservation of the Continental Shelf Fisheries*, April 5th, 1948. Article 1 of the Law begins thus:

"The Ministry of Fisheries shall issue regulations establishing explicitly bounded conservation zones within the limits of the continental shelf of Iceland: wherein all fisheries shall be subject to Icelandic rules and control.....The Ministry shall further issue the necessary regulations for the protection of the fishing grounds within the said zones."

Fisheries Jurisdiction in Iceland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, Reykjavik, 1972, Appendix 1, p.25.

46. *Annual Report of the WFA for 1960*, London, p.12.
47. *Fishing News*, 3rd March, 1961.
48. *ibid.*
49. *Fishing News*, 10th March, 1961. The same edition of *Fishing News* quoted the reactions of Icelandic politicians to the agreement one of whom was Einar Olgiersson, leader of the Icelandic Communist Party, who argued:

"This is a fateful hour in the fight for independence. The proposal is, in fact, a renunciation of our rights, the destruction of the fishing ground, the pirating of Iceland's riches and increasing poverty."
50. *Fishing News*, 24th March, 1961.
51. *Fishing News*, 6th January, 1961,
52. *Fishing News*, 18th March, 1961.
53. *Minutes of a Meeting held on 11th December, 1960*, Minutes Book for 1960, GSDFVE & FU.
54. *Fishing News*, 18th March, 1961.
55. *ibid.*
56. *Minutes of a Meeting held on 10th March, 1961*, Minutes Book for 1961, GSDFVE & FU.
57. *Fishing News*, 14th April, 1961.
58. *ibid.*
59. *Fishing News*, 5th May, 1961. At Aberdeen the ban on Icelandic landings remained, as it has done to the present day.
60. *ibid.*

61. *Fishing News*, 12th May, 1961.
62. *ibid.*
63. *Fishing News*, 19th May, 1961.
64. *ibid.*
65. *Minutes of a meeting held on 26th May, 1961, Minutes Book for 1961, GSDFVE & FU.*
66. *Fishing News*, 23rd June, 1961.
67. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and the F. & G.P. Committee, T & GWU, Vol.XLIV, 1961, p.189.*
68. *Fishing News* 23rd September, 1961.
69. By the beginning of August, the UFU claimed that it had a total membership, amongst Grimsby fishermen, of 1,850, *Fishing News*, 11th August, 1961.
70. *Fishing News*, 15th December, 1961.
71. *op.cit.* p.186.
72. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and the F. & G.P. Committee, T & GWU, Vol.XLIV, 1966, Min.247, p.54.*
73. *Fishing News*, 17th March, 1961.
74. *Guardian*, 24th March, 1961.
75. *Guardian*, 25th March, 1961.
76. *Grimsby Evening Telegraph*, 21st March, 1966.
77. *Guardian*, 28th March, 1966.
78. *Fishing News*, 1st April, 1966.

79. *ibid.*

80. *Guardian*, 29th April, 1966. The creation of a central registration scheme was still being sought by the T & GWU in 1967.

81. *Guardian*, 16th January, 1967. Maritime industrial relations in Britain contradicts Professor Kahn-Freund's oft-quoted statement, which he made in 1953, that

"There is perhaps, no major country in the world in which the law has played a less significant role in the shaping of (industrial) relations than in Great Britain and in which today the law and the legal profession has less to do with labour relations."

O. Kahn-Freund, in A. Flanders and H.A. Clegg (eds.) *'The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain'*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1953, p.44.

82. J. McConville, *op.cit.* p.54.

83. J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.320.

84. *House of Commons Debates*, Vol.772, Col.1335, 12th December, 1969.

85. N. Lewis, *The Merchant Shipping Act, 1970*, *The Modern Law Review*, Vol.24, January, 1971, p.55.

86. J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* pp.314-315.

87. *Guardian*, 16th January, 1967. Jones in his speech made reference to the Beaufort Scale which is used to indicate the force of the wind. This scale, which ranges from 0 (flat calm, mirror smooth sea to 12 (hurricane), gives the following description of Force 8 to Force 10 weather.

Force on Beaufort Scale	Nautical miles per hour	Description	Height of sea in feet	Deep Sea criterion
8	34-40	Near gale	18	High waves of increasing length, crests form spindrift.
9	41-47	Strong gale	23	High waves, dense streaks of foam, crests roll over.
10	48-55	Storm	29	Very high waves, long overhanging crests, surface of sea white with foam.

It is assumed by the author that Jones meant by "Black ice conditions" the problem of the accretion of ice on trawlers, which can have a dangerous effect upon their stability. Fishing vessels have capsized under the weight of ice formed on the superstructure, rails, masts, deck machinery etc. It is known that the *Ross Cleveland* of Hull and probably the *Kingston Peridot*, also of Hull, foundered in this way. In the fishing grounds within, or near to, the Arctic Circle, ice can form quite quickly upon a vessel in fog, and by heavy spray adhering to metal and wood. The last is almost always dangerous since it occurs quite rapidly which in turn leads to a growing instability which in many instances, causes a vessel to capsize. A trawler which encounters worsening weather conditions, i.e. heavy seas and intense cold, may have extreme difficulty in seeking escape because in these circumstances it may prove dangerous to turn broadside on to the weather, but if the vessel steams head into the wind this action causes spray to be thrown over the bows which freezes and so the accretion of ice continues.

88. J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.285.
89. The National Maritime Board, which originated in 1916 as the Mercantile Marine Conditions Committee, is the joint negotiating body for terms and conditions of employment in the merchant navy. It is also concerned with the supply of officers and seamen under the joint control of ship-owners and trade unions. See J.S. McConville, *op.cit.* pp.3-10, and D.H. Moresby, *op.cit.* pp.197-199.
90. J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.286.
91. *ibid.* p.287.

92. Cousins resigned from his post of Minister of Technology on 3rd July, 1966.
93. J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.320.
94. J. Tunstall, '*Fish: an antiquated industry*', Fabian Tract 380, London, 1968, p.19.
95. *ibid.* pp,19 and 20. Tunstall cites 13 ministries, plus the WFA and the HIB, which take part in the organisation of the industry.
96. *ibid.* p.20.
97. *Annual Report of the WFA, 1960*, p.22.
98. *Final Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety*, Cmnd.4114, HMSO, London, 1969, pp.8-9.
99. The proposed merger was referred to the Commission on the basis that the assets of the new company would exceed £5 million. See D.J. Whitmarsh, *op.cit.* pp.77-86.
100. *Guardian*, 18th May, 1966.
101. D.J. Whitmarsh, p.78.
102. *ibid.* pp.80-81.
103. *Guardian*, 25th May, 1966.
104. See J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* pp.20-21, and D.J. Whitmarsh, *op.cit.* pp.81-82.
105. The Industrial Reorganisation Corporation was created by the Labour Government.
106. *Observer*, 14th July, 1968.
107. D.J. Whitmarsh, *op.cit.* p.84.

108. *Final Report of the Committee of Inquiry concerning the Port Transport Industry*, Cmnd.2734, HMSO, London, 1965.
- 109 D.F. Wilson, *op.cit.* p.186.
110. M.P. Jackson, *op.cit.* p.130.
111. C. Whelan, 'The Law and the Use of Troops in Industrial Disputes', Working Papers No.2, Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, Wolfson College, Oxford, 1979, pp.3-15.
112. *Minutes of a meeting of 7/146 Engineers and Deck Branch (Aberdeen) held on 11th June, 1967*, Minutes Book for 1967, T & GWU, Transport House, 44 King Street, Aberdeen.
113. The moribund state of the trade union branches in the other ports was mentioned on numerous occasions in the discussions between the author and T & GWU officials and was confirmed by the dearth of branch minutes books and other records. Goldstein in his extensive study of the T & GWU discovered that attendance at branch meetings was extremely low and he formed the view that only four per cent of semi-skilled and unskilled members could be defined as active trade unionists. J. Goldstein, 'The Government of British Unions', Allen & Unwin, London, 1952.

CHAPTER 9

TRADE UNION POLICY OBJECTIVES CONCERNING THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY OF FISHERMEN AND THE DECASUALISATION OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT

C H A P T E R 9

TRADE UNION POLICY OBJECTIVES
CONCERNING THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY OF FISHERMEN AND
THE DECASUALISATION OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT

It was the sinking, within a few days of each other, in January 1968, inside or close to the Arctic Circle, of three Hull trawlers, the *St Romanus*, the *Kingston Peridot* and the *Ross Cleveland*, with the loss of fifty-nine men (each vessel had a complement of twenty men, one of whom, the mate of the *Ross Cleveland* managed to scramble ashore from a life raft when the vessel capsized off a northern Iceland fjord) that focussed public attention upon the issue of the occupational safety of fishermen. (See Table 29, p.452, Fatal Accident Rates in the Fishing Industry in Comparison with Fatal Accident Rates in the Coalmining and Construction Industries, 1961-1978).

For several weeks following the loss of the three trawlers, the mass media sought to provide their audiences with descriptive accounts of the hazardous nature of the work and workplace of the fishermen, the trawler companies and their employment practices, the role of the state and legislation in the conduct of the industry, and the recent history of the T & GWU in representing the interests of its trawler-crew members.¹

In the immediate aftermath of the loss of the Hull men and their vessels, numerous protests were made to the government, about the management of the men and the trawler fleets by, amongst others, fishermen and their families, the T & GWU

and other trade unions, MPs from all of the parliamentary parties and a group of wives - and widows - of Hull fishermen.² This latter group became the centre of attention for the representatives of the mass media.

The *Observer*, for example, described two of the leaders of the Hull wives' group in the following way:

"The dominant leader is Mrs. Lilian Bilocca. She is 38, a vast and handsome woman in a headscarf and white raincoat. Her husband does not fish. He is a donkey-engine greaser in a cargo ship..... and is from Malta. Mrs. Bilocca, who was born in Hull, says she is 'the mother of trawlermen' and looks as if she was the mother of them all; brave and magnificent. The other leader is Mrs. Smallbone, the wife of a trawlerman and mother of six children. She looks more like the standard pattern of protester, but shook too much with nervousness when she spoke to be anything but entirely amateur and sincere."³

After one meeting held in the hall of the Fishermen's Bethel,⁴ several hundred women marched to the fish dock, where they demanded a meeting with representatives of the employers. One newspaper report of the incident stated:

"They threatened to board trawlers, to smash down the office doors of the owners, and to demand a meeting with the Prime Minister 'even if it meant going to gaol'. A man (who had taken part in the demonstration) and who had lost a son (a deckie-learner)⁵ said that 'the owners want putting up against a wall and bloody shooting, I tell you'."⁶

Local T & GWU officials publicly encouraged some of the activities of the wives' group. D. Shenton, Regional Secretary, No.10 Region, whose office was situated in Hull welcomed this spontaneous protest movement:

"The wives, even though they moved off at tangents, had nevertheless created a climate for reform. They had performed a service for every man who went to sea in a trawler."⁷

Shenton, his officials, and members of his Regional Committee, were willing to consider sympathetically an application from the women's group to form a branch of the union, so that they "could keep an eye on union affairs while their men were at sea", even although the union's constitution and rules did not provide for such a development.⁸

A deputation of the women travelled to London where, accompanied by Labour MPs, national and local T & GWU officials, they had a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, F.R. Peart, and the Minister of State at the Board of Trade, J.W.P. Mallalieu. The demands, made by the deputation, included compulsory daily radio contact between vessels, a reduction in the working hours of crews, an inspection by a safety officer of vessels immediately prior to their sailing to the fishing grounds, a full crew for every voyage, a full-time radio officer (the *St Romanus* had sailed without one, although skippers had to possess rudimentary skills in wireless telegraphy), all crew members to be adequately trained, and a training ship to be used in the training of new recruits to the industry.⁹

In Grimsby a group of fishermen's wives emerged which presented a petition, calling for greater safety at sea, to the town's MP, C.A.R. Crosland, who was the President of the Board of Trade.¹⁰ Another petition, organised by a similar group of women, which contained the signatures of

approximately 700 wives and mothers of Fleetwood fishermen, was given to the Board of Trade by J.L. Jones, Assistant Executive Secretary of the T & GWU and chairman of the workers' side of the NJIC.¹¹ In Grimsby, twelve fishermen's wives joined the local fishermen's branch of the union in order to develop further their 'Safety at Sea' campaign. Membership of the T & GWU enabled them to attend branch meetings whilst their husbands were at sea.¹²

There were those, however, who resented the intrusion of a women's protest movement into the arena of maritime industrial relations. For example, L. Oliver, Secretary of the HTOG claimed:

"The men don't want women to fight their battles. The men coming back from Iceland are furious that people are taking notice of a crowd of hysterical women."¹³

It would appear from interviews the author conducted amongst Hull fishermen, albeit almost ten years later, that, Oliver's intemperate language aside, there had been a substantial degree of resentment felt by fishermen towards the activities of the women's group. It was the case that, within a few weeks of its emergence, the women decided to withdraw from any active involvement in matters of safety and industrial relations and instead concentrate upon welfare and social interests.¹⁴

In response to the protests emanating from the fishing communities, trade union, MPs and others, the Board of Trade advised all trawlers fishing off the north and west coasts of Iceland (where two of the trawlers, the *Kingston Peridot* and the *Ross Cleveland*, had been fishing shortly before

their loss) to withdraw from the area until the arrival of a weather-advisory vessel (the stern freezer-trawler *Orsino*). Two other measures introduced by the Board of Trade were (a) trawlers to report their positions to the weather ship every twelve hours and (b) all distant-water trawlers of 140 feet and above in length to carry a qualified wireless telegraphy officer.¹⁵

Not all the interested parties welcomed the stationing of a weather-advisory vessel in Icelandic waters under the control of a captain, appointed by the Board of Trade, who had the authority to advise trawler skippers to cease fishing in worsening weather conditions.¹⁶ In a radio call from the Icelandic fishing grounds, a Grimsby skipper, who claimed to be speaking on behalf of forty-one other Grimsby and Hull skippers in that area, claimed that the provision of such a weather-advisory vessel was:

".....an insult to the skippers and men who were lost and slight on our intelligenceIsafjörð where the *Ross Cleveland* had been sheltering when she went down, was known to be the safest place on the west coast of Iceland in a gale. No vessel - not even the largest in the world - or no man could have made the slightest difference to the ferocity of the hurricane or its disastrous results."¹⁷

Another similar complaint was made by a director of Ross Company, of Grimsby, who argued:

".....that foreign vessels would be fishing daily and laughing at the poor old British. They would be landing their catches on the Humber and enjoying the joke as ours come back half full because they have been withdrawn from calm waters by a government who listened to three women (sic), backed by the unions without proper investigation."¹⁸

TABLE 29

Fatal Accident Rates in the Fishing Industry in
Comparison with Fatal Accident Rates in the
Coal-Mining and Construction Industries:
1961-1978

	<u>Fatal (a)</u> <u>Accidents</u>	<u>Incidence rates per 100,000 at risk</u>		
		<u>Fishing</u>	<u>Industry *</u> <u>Coal-Mining</u>	<u>Construction</u>
1961	30	114.5	39.8	22.1
1962	44	168.6	45.1	22.0
1963	24	96.4	46.9	19.7
1964	30	123.5	38.4	20.6
1965	47	196.7	44.6	17.0
1966	33	143.5	36.0	21.1
1967	20	88.1	36.1	15.8
1968	84	385.3	31.4	19.1
1969	30	140.9	30.6	22.4
1970	23	111.7	29.9	18.5
1971	26	122.6	24.2	19.6
1972	23	104.1	22.1	18.7
1973	28	123.9	29.6	21.6
1974	73	320.2	18.7	16.0
1975	29	135.5	24.7	17.7
1976	30	143.5	19.6	15.3
1977	28	153.8	15.8	13.1 (b)
1978	45	247.3	25.4	12.1 (b)

(a) Includes missing at sea.

(b) Provisional

* In all of the years tabulated here there were, of course, far fewer than 100,000 fishermen but this scale is the one employed by departments of state and the Health and Safety Executive.

Source: Fishing: Department of Trade (Maritime Division)
 Others: Health and Safety Executive.

Other protests were made by the HTOG and the GTOG about the work of the *Orsino* but they were ignored by the government.

On March 5th, 1968, the President of the Board of Trade appointed a Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety, under the chairmanship of Admiral Sir Deric Holland Martin.¹⁹ D. Basnett, a senior official of the GMWU was a member of the Committee and so, too, was Professor R.S.F. Schilling, an occupational health specialist. Schilling had written a paper in 1966 entitled '*Trawler Fishing: an extreme occupation*', which was based on his research voyages on trawlers and in which the following oft-quoted passage is to be found:

"In a trawler crew which had fished continuously for five days and nights I noticed signs of fatigue - an ashen grey pallor of the face, slower movements, irritability.....It reminded me of what I saw among soldiers during the retreat of Dunkirk."²⁰

Shortly after the appointment of the Committee of Inquiry, the T & GWU published a broadsheet "*The Fishermen's Charter*", (see Appendix 8, p.604) which called for radical changes in terms and conditions of employment, e.g. Merchant Navy conditions of a forty-hour week, with overtime and week-end pay and the provision of protective clothing, bedding and tools.²¹ Equally radical proposals were made concerning industrial relations procedures and practices, e.g. a statutory minimum rest period of twelve hours in any period of twenty-four hours, longer periods ashore between voyages and a jointly-controlled registration

scheme. The most controversial proposal proved to be one that Jones and his colleagues had earlier raised which called for trade union representatives on all vessels:

"Whilst any unsettled problems could be referred to end of trip, crew's representative would have right to raise safety matters with the skipper and would have access to wind gauges and other instruments in operating a proposed ban on fishing in Force 8 gale, or above."²²

Under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, fishermen had the right to complain about their food and accommodation aboard their vessels, and also their wages and poundage to the Board of Trade's superintendents of mercantile marine, who were based in the major fishing ports. However, as with seamen, they were not allowed to take industrial action in furtherance of their complaints. For example, a newspaper reported in 1968 a court case in which nine deckhands were found guilty and fined twenty pounds for combining together to impede the progress of the Hull trawler *Apollo*. The men had complained to the skipper that the fo'c'sle stove would not burn and they were cold:

"Mr. Rodney Jackson, prosecuting, said: 'This mutiny involved eight spare hands and a third hand.....There was no suggestion that drink was involved when, after the skipper ordered the ship to put to sea (the vessel was in the northern Norwegian port of Harstad for repairs to the winch) the nine accused refused to handle the mooring ropes. The skipper and mate cast the ship off, and took the vessel to sea but the men still refused to work, complaining that the fo'c'sle stove would not burn and they were cold'."²³

In his defence of the men's action, the defending solicitor stated that at the time the temperature was below freezing point, that warm accommodation was a necessity of life in

such circumstances and hence the men had a justifiable complaint.

To move, from a trade union limited grievance procedure, to the kind of representation advocated by the T & GWU proved too radical for both the employers' associations and the trawler officers' guilds. When Jones and his T & GWU colleagues sought to persuade the NJIC to accept the objectives of '*The Fishermen's Charter*', their advocacy led to the dissolution of the Council. Jones reported to the General Executive Council of the T & GWU:

"A meeting with the Employers' Side Chairman and the Secretary of the National Joint Industrial Council for the Trawler Fishing Industry was attended when it was agreed to dissolve the Council arising from the withdrawal of a number of local Employers' Associations. Suitable provisions were made to ensure the development of effective negotiating arrangements at Port level."24

A somewhat different account, of the abrogation of the NJIC, is given in the minutes of a meeting of the GSDFVE & FU. The secretary gave his account of the last meeting of the NJIC, which was followed by a debate amongst the members:

"Mr. Jones of the Transport & General Workers' Union went on to state that a Sub-Committee (of the workers' side) had been set up to look into various projects of the Fishing Industry, such as safety at sea, and also a charter that was produced by that Union which stated that they wanted a representative on board each ship to act as Shop Steward, and for each ship after 21 days to have six days in dock, and this was to be submitted to the Board of Trade and the Government inquiry, and owing to this Charter, the Trawler Owners will not have anything to do with and have drawn out of the NJIC along with the Skippers and Mates Guilds of Hull and Grimsby, so after lengthy debates about the Charter it was finally

agreed by the members present, that
 our Organisation would not be associated
 with the Charter."²⁵

Whilst the hostility of the owners' associations and the skippers' and mates' guilds towards 'The Fishermen's Charter' is attributable to their defence of the prevailing patterns of dominance in the industry, buttressed as they were by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, the reaction of the small Grimsby union owed something to their past resentments of the much larger trade union and the institutionalised perception of the industry and industrial relations prevalent amongst its members. Some of the reforms advocated by the T & GWU were quite compatible with a number of changes that the GSDFVE & FU had sought in negotiations over a number of years that its representatives had conducted with the GFVOA, e.g. a port registration scheme and one hundred per cent trade union membership.²⁶

The reversion to port negotiations after some twelve years of port and national bargaining presented a number of problems for the trade unions and skippers' and mates' associations. For example, they found themselves in an analogous position, vis-a-vis the employers and the state, to the earlier small, port-based trade unions. The T & GWU members were partially deprived of the services of a skilled and forceful leader in negotiations with employers at the national level. Given that Jones had numerous other responsibilities, it followed that he could not actively participate in negotiations with

employers in each of the ports.²⁷ A national forum had been lost and those ports with moribund T & GWU fishermen's branches were denied the experience and solidarity offered by the Aberdeen branch which, even although geographically remote from the other ports, had a much more active branch membership and whose activists enjoyed high status amongst their crewmates.²⁸ It might also have been a too retrogressive development for the skippers' and mates' associations, even although they voluntarily withdrew along with the owners' associations from the NJIC, in that whilst skippers and mates possessed formidable overt and legalistic power over their crews, they and their associations were quite powerless in their relations with employers and employers' associations.

Tunstall in his book and his Fabian pamphlet argued that only one in approximately fifty deckhands became a skipper and that the employment of skippers was "chronically insecure" and that what vestigial security skippers had depended on their performance in bringing to port good catches of fish.²⁹ Skippers had tenure on a trip-to-trip basis and were aware that they could be dismissed on a managerial whim. The members of the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety concurred with Tunstall's view:

"Skippers' performance under the present conditions of employment tends to be judged largely in terms of their fish-catching ability and we doubt whether all managements place sufficient stress on running a ship on which morale and safety standards are high. If skippers could rely on a greater degree of security the balance between safety and productive efficiency could be more easily adjusted in the direction we think necessary."³⁰

In these circumstances, with members of officers' guilds in competition with each other for a relatively restricted number of berths, *vis-a-vis* the number of men in possession of skippers' and mates' certificates it was always difficult to display a trade union solidarity in their relations with the employers. This being the case, it may have served the skippers' and mates' interests to work closely with the T & GWU members of port committees and the NJIC where, that is, they had objectives and interests in common.³¹ This disarray amongst employees worked to the advantage of the employers not only in the working environment but at the level of the state and the legislature. (This point will be developed later in this chapter.)

Early in 1969, the General Executive Council of the T & GWU took the decision to abolish the Trawler Fishing Trade Section Committee and the post of National Fishing Officer (the last incumbent P. Henderson had retired owing to ill-health). The Fishing Section became part of the Docks and Inland Waterways Trade Group.³² Later the Council accepted a proposal to authorise an annual "Inter-Port Meeting" or annual conference of delegates representing members employed in the Fishing industry. A.D. Shenton, the Regional Secretary of No.10 Region, was given the task of co-ordinating the activities of fishermen's branches in the ports and the work of the district officials whose duties included advising and assisting these branches in the collective bargaining

process.³³ Two observations can be made concerning the decisions to disband the national fishing group, to place it in the Docks and Inland Waterways Group and to give the work of national co-ordinator to the regional secretary based in Hull. First, the total number of trawler-crew members (approximately 7,000) represented a miniscule proportion of the total T & GWU membership (about 1,800,000 in 1969) hence the General Executive Council decided that this fishing membership did not warrant a national trade group of its own or a national officer. Second, if the task of national co-ordinator for the industry was to be given to a regional secretary then the choice had to be the Regional Secretary of No.10 Region, whose region embraced both Grimsby and Hull, which at that time were still the largest fishing ports, and which had the biggest concentration of trawler companies, vessels and fishermen in the UK.

Whilst these changes were taking place in the structure and processes of collective bargaining within the industry, the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety (the Holland-Martin Committee) continued with its deliberations. In his memoirs, the former Prime Minister, the Rt.Hon. Harold Wilson, praised both the Committee and its chairman:

"In addition to receiving delegations from the fishermen and MPs from the fishing ports, I took a number of ministerial meetings and instructions were given for a 'mother' ship from the Royal Navy to be at hand in dangerous waters. An inquiry was set up under the chairmanship of Admiral Sir Deric Holland-Martin; an inquiry remarkable for the speed with which he won the confidence of the industry, and especially the unions, together with the naturally militant wives in the fishing ports, and also for the constructive attitude of the trade unions, whose evidence was led by Jack Jones."³⁴

The T & GWU gave both oral and written evidence, to the Committee of Inquiry, covering a wide range of issues in the field of safety and in industrial relations. Criticisms were made by Jones and his colleagues of extant safety regulations, terms and conditions of employment and the working conditions of fishermen, particularly on the side trawlers.³⁵ In all of these areas, the T & GWU put to the Committee its recommendations for improvements. These included extensions of minimum rest periods whilst vessels were on the fishing grounds, extended time ashore between voyages (the formula the T & GWU recommended was two days leave for every five days spent at sea), longer annual holidays, a minimum age of entry for recruits of seventeen years, improved training courses for fishermen (especially in the areas of survival and safety techniques), changes in the remuneration and conditions of employment of skippers, and the election of crew's trade union representatives provided with the statutory right to raise matters of safety with the skipper. It was envisaged that complaints raised by a representative would be entered into the ship's log³⁶ and be subjected to investigation on a vessel's return to port. It was conceded, by Jones and his colleagues, that the skipper should retain the power to decide for himself whether the vessel should continue to fish.³⁷ Another objective sought by the union was the creation of port safety committees with equal numbers of union and employer representatives. The union also argued for the implementation of registration schemes at all the major

ports and the decasualisation of the employment relationship.

When the representatives of the employers' associations and skippers' and mates' guilds were interviewed by the Committee of Inquiry, there were indications given that some of the T & GWU's proposals could be placed before port negotiation committees. However, employers' and skippers' and mates' associations reacted in a hostile way to the suggestion concerning trade union representatives on board trawlers.³⁸ In this opposition they were being consistent since this controversial issue had brought about their withdrawal from the NJIC the previous year. It was argued that the system of shipboard representation, if it were to be implemented, would pose a major threat to the authority of the skipper and to crew discipline.³⁹

In the light of Tunstall's criticisms of the Fleck Committee:

"The Fleck Committee produced a very unimpressive report. It met only once every three weeks in its three years of life. There is no evidence of any of the members having been to sea; to anyone who has been to sea on fishing vessels the Fleck Committee exhibits a startling ignorance of quite simple facts of fishing life".⁴⁰

mention ought to be made of the work of the Holland;Martin Committee. The Committee's first meeting took place on 5th March, 1968, and the Final Report was presented to the President of the Board of Trade on 9th May, 1969. In between these two dates, the Committee held thirty-five meetings, visits were made to the main fishing ports, the

Chairman spent several days on the *Orsino* whilst four of his colleagues went to sea on distant-water trawlers. In addition visits were made to Iceland and the Federal Republic of Germany, where discussions took place with state officials and others involved in the respective fishing industries. Moreover, the Committee published an Interim Report (Cmnd.3773) in September 1968.⁴¹

The 'Summary of Recommendations' contained in the Report is made up of eighty-three recommendations, over seven pages, which were grouped under the following headings: Accidents to men and casualties to vessels; Services for trawlers at sea; Radio communication, search and rescue; Design and construction of trawlers; Trawler's equipment; Research and development; Conditions of work and fatigue; Health and fitness, employment of young persons; Conditions of employment; Training; Management and industrial relations.⁴²

A note of criticism of the T & GWU was voiced by the Committee to the effect that:

".....the Transport and General Workers' Union has been criticised by some crew members we have met for having taken an insufficient informed interest in the problems of the fishing industry in the past. Various estimates of union membership have been quoted to us in different ports, ranging from just over 15 per cent of the work force to as high as 90 per cent, but whatever the true proportion we suspect that the majority of fishermen are not active trade unionists.there may be some substance in the criticisms we have heard, but the Union have told us of improvements which are being made in its organisation and we welcome the assurance that it is taking steps to meet the new demands on its resources."⁴³

For its part, the T & GWU welcomed, albeit with some reservations, the findings and recommendations of the Committee. In a broadsheet entitled '*The T & GWU and Holland Martin*', J. Jones, who had become General Secretary of the union, following the retirement of F. Cousins, claimed that the Report confirmed many of the criticisms of the industry made by the union over the past two years:⁴⁴

"The Report broadly accepts the arguments we have put forward as a Union - that improvements in equipment, vessels and methods, necessary as these are, are not enough. It is the whole of the fisherman's life and work that is to be transformed."⁴⁵

Leaving to one side the recommendations concerning trawler design, equipment, radio communications and so on, it would appear that other recommendations, anent conditions of employment, conditions of work and industrial relations, are broadly sympathetic to some of the criticisms and the stated objectives of the T & GWU. For example, the Committee stated that deckhand-learners should be prohibited from making their first trip on a distant-water trawler in winter and that youths under seventeen years of age should not be permitted to work for more than twelve hours in a period of twenty-four.⁴⁶ The report also stated that the state should introduce statutory requirements on minimum rest periods on distant-water trawlers for all members of the crew.⁴⁷ When fishing, crews should have rest periods of six hours between periods of duty of twelve and sixteen hours. On the question of shore leave, it was recommended that the minimum period ashore ought to be increased to

eighty-four hours on distant-water vessels and sixty hours on near and middle-water vessels which spent ten or more days at sea.⁴⁸

Where the employment of skippers was concerned, the Report advocated the adoption of twelve-month long or two-year contracts of employment and a restructured payments system consisting of a salary and a reduction of poundage.⁴⁹ In its evidence to the Committee, the T & GWU had put forward the view that the precarious nature of the skippers' position *vis-a-vis* their land-based managers and employers, and their system of remuneration based on poundage, even although they received 'fall-back' pay, encouraged some of their number to fish in deteriorating weather conditions to the serious risk of injury and even death for deckcrews working on exposed decks.⁵⁰ Employers' associations and skippers' and mates' guilds conceded risks were taken but that such behaviour was not widespread amongst skippers and thus did not constitute a threat to the safety of crews.⁵¹

The Report expressed approval of the extension of port registration schemes to all major ports:

".....we recommend that the owners and union should co-operate in extending the principle of registration to all ports at the earliest possible date. The schemes should be jointly controlled by both sides of the industry and in ports where the trawler officers have organised their own guilds, we could see considerable advantage in inviting them to be represented as well on the Port Registration Committee."⁵²

Along with the registration schemes, the Committee recommended the establishment in all ports of joint disciplinary committees; these committees to be operated in conjunction with formal

disciplinary procedures within the trawler companies.⁵³

In addition the Committee urged the employers, the guilds, and the union to co-operate in tackling the problems of illicit liquor and unauthorised drinking on board trawlers. The Committee was of the opinion that if a more effective disciplinary code eliminated or reduced the practice of sneaking liquor on board vessels then:

"Owners might well consider equipping the larger trawlers with bars for crews in line with modern practice on some merchant vessels; experience suggests that, if properly organised, such facilities are seldom abused."⁵⁴

On the issue of shipboard representatives, the Committee put forward a number of reservations:

".....we doubt whether there are enough individuals on either side of the industry with sufficient experience of modern industrial relations for the scheme to be operated on most vessels. In particular, it would be difficult to find sufficient men of the right calibre to act as representatives; an incompetent crew's representative could endanger the smooth working of a ship and might seriously undermine discipline on board. Opposition to the idea is widespread and adamant among owners and skippers; the crew members we met have themselves been luke-warm about it."⁵⁵

The Committee was opposed to the immediate introduction of the principle of representation on board the trawlers. A development of this kind if applied to all trawler companies would be both ill-advised and premature. In spite of its reservations, the Committee stated that a limited complaints procedure, within a restricted framework of shipboard representation, could be tested in an experimental way by the more progressive companies:⁵⁶

".....we believe that a responsibly operated system of representation could contribute to improving safety at sea, both indirectly by improving communications between crews and management, and directly by drawing the attention of the skippers to potentially dangerous situations. Progressive management in many other industries will generally emphasise the value of shop stewards, including those representing quite small groups of men, as a channel of communication with employees; and making due allowance for the different conditions at sea, we consider that crew's representatives could perform an equally valuable role."⁵⁷

It was envisaged by the Committee that an experimental scheme could emerge from negotiations between progressive firms and the T & GWU and not by the introduction of legislation. It would appear from the Report, that the members of the Committee had made no attempt to question the pervasive perception of the industry's uniqueness since they accepted the need for separate legislation to cover industrial relations, conditions of employment, and the managerial prerogative.⁵⁸ This view of the separateness of maritime industrial relations is one that is shared by others who have studied the maritime industries.⁵⁹ Kitchen, who subjected British maritime labour legislation to a sustained critique, shared this perception:

"The separateness of the ship as a workplace..... means that in all likelihood there will continue to be a divergence between labour legislation affecting the shipping industry and industry ashore. This in itself reinforces the self-contained nature of the industrial relations system. Its problems are unique and are likely to remain so."⁶⁰

H. Wilson in his memoirs appears to suggest that the Committee of Inquiry's Report was sympathetically received and acted upon with despatch:

"The Holland-Martin Report, produced with commendable speed and thoroughness, led later to legislation, introduced together with new legislation to modernise the Merchant Shipping Act, on which the Government and the shipping industry had worked incessantly following our pledge after the ending of the seamen's strike (in 1966)."61

This observation is, however, an over-simplified account of events surrounding the Merchant Shipping Act, 1970. For example, the T & GWU had voiced objections to a number of disciplinary proposals contained in the Merchant Shipping Bill.⁶² Having failed to secure the desired changes in representations made to the departments responsible, the union set up a small working party, under the chairmanship of A.D. Shenton who invited the Labour MP for Hull North, K. McNamara, to participate in the group's task, which was the preparation of a brief which, with the assistance of the General Secretary, was presented to a meeting to which the union's twenty-seven sponsored MPs had received invitations.⁶³ With this brief, detailing the changes the union wished to see made to the Bill, the MPs, most of whom knew little or nothing about maritime industrial relations, were able, with McNamara's guidance and advice (he was not at that time a T & GWU-sponsored MP but he possessed a detailed knowledge of the Hull fishing industry) to secure a number of amendments to the Bill as it went through its Committee stage.⁶⁴ For example, fishermen, in sharp contrast with merchant seamen, were excluded from a number of penal clauses in the Bill that were designed to reinforce the power of captains of vessels, and their owners, to discipline, by way of fines

and dismissal, miscreants who wilfully disobeyed orders, or who wilfully neglected their duties or who were absent without leave at the time of the vessel's departure.⁶⁵

In order to maintain discipline, safety and efficient operations on board trawlers, the Board of Trade retained the power to introduce regulations which would specify both misconduct and the sanctions to deal with such behaviour. Under these regulations the sanctions were to match those used in the Merchant Navy to discipline those who were judged to be unruly or disobedient seamen. One concession to the T & GWU concerned hours of work. The Board was given the power to make regulations, if its officials thought it desirable, to prescribe maximum periods of duty and minimum periods of rest for those employed on fishing vessels.⁶⁶ In some ports, matters of discipline - or indiscipline - were dealt with by the Port Disciplinary Committees. In Aberdeen, for example, the Disciplinary Committee which was established in May, 1969, was composed of four members, two employers' representatives and two employee representatives. This committee had the power to inflict a range of penalties on miscreants from a fine of a few pounds to permanent suspension, i.e. removal from the Port Register, which meant, in effect, loss of employment with no reinstatement. Two aspects of this system are worthy of note; a) the fines paid by those found guilty of a misdemeanour went to the employers who returned it to the fishermen at large by way of a 'good conduct' bonus

and, b) a fisherman could be suspended *sine die*, which, in practice, meant that he could, after a period of six months, seek re-engagement with a trawler company, subject to the approval of the Port Disciplinary Committee (see Appendix 14 pp AFVOA and T & GWU (Fishermen's Section) Joint Disciplinary Procedure and 7/146 Fishermen's Branch Memorandum on Disciplinary Procedures).

Ellis (who was one of the T & GWU sponsored MPs involved in the debates) and R. Johnson are of the opinion that the success of the T & GWU sponsored MPs in obtaining amendments to the Merchant Shipping Bill demonstrates the importance of trade union-sponsored MPs, in the protection of a trade union's interests, when a Labour Administration is in office. This, they claim, is given added emphasis by the failure of the NUS, which did not have a single sponsored MP, to win any concessions from government ministers. Ellis and Johnson stated:

"News of this notable achievement (i.e. securing amendments) reached the ears of the National Union of Seamen who, too late, realised that they had failed to make their voice heard while business of crucial importance to their members was under discussion. On the day when the third reading commenced the T & GWU group chairman received a memo from the NUS setting out the points on which they would like to put amendments. But it was much too late."67

Two observations can be made here. One is that the changes secured by the T & GWU MPs were of a marginal rather than a radical nature, i.e. the Government appeared to accept the view of fishermen and other seafarers as a unique and isolated group. Control of legal provisions,

governing maritime industrial relations and industrial practice, was retained by the Board of Trade, e.g. crews' agreements and discipline. The second observation concerns Wilson's brief account of the enactment of this legislation which fails to make any mention of the opposition of the NUS to the Merchant Shipping Bill. Industrial action was threatened in protest but this was averted when the Prime Minister made a promise, to a delegation from the NUS he received in Downing Street, that the government, if still in office, would review the penal clauses in three years. In the event, the Merchant Shipping Act, 1974 repealed some of the disciplinary sections of the 1970 Act.⁶⁸ It ought to be pointed out that Wilson's administration introduced legislation in 1970 [The Fishing Vessels (Safety Provisions) Act 1970] which incorporated a number of recommendations made by Holland-Martin and his colleagues, concerning a) the structural strength of fishing vessels, b) structural fire protection, c) weather-tight integrity, and c) vessel stability.

Whilst the afore-mentioned events were taking place, a growing number of observers were expressing doubts about the economic viability of the catching sector of the industry. The *Times*, for example, observed:

"The simple fact is that the industry is in a state of dire crisis and its collapse would have severe social implications, not to mention affecting the Balance of Payments to the tune of perhaps £40 million.⁶⁹

It was at this moment that an unofficial stoppage of Aberdeen fishermen took place. The strikers sought an assurance from the AFVOA that the association would take disciplinary action against the lumpers (employed by the association) in order to eliminate, or reduce, their unofficial stoppages at the market which, the striking fishermen claimed, reduced their earnings. An increase in earnings was sought in both basic weekly pay and poundage rates and another demand was for the free issue of protective clothing.⁷⁰

Initially the men were instructed to resume sailing by their local officials, since they were in breach of the agreement and procedure concerning industrial action but the men chose to ignore the instruction. After five days, the stoppage was made official and thus it became, where the T & GWU was concerned, the first official strike of fishermen.⁷¹ A strike committee was formed of both engineers and deckhands under the chairmanship of J.B. Laing (who was an engineer) and from the start of the dispute the men's activities were co-ordinated in a disciplined manner.

Within two weeks, over 1,000 fishermen were officially on strike and there were few dissenters. Small boats were allowed to land their fish and because the market was increasingly deprived their crews (share-fishermen) enjoyed high returns for their catches. One skipper of a small seine net vessel said that the strike "was in some ways a blessing".⁷² An offer of a pay increase was

turned down at a mass meeting since it fell short of the demand for a basic daily rate of three pounds. The men also refused a suggestion that the strike committee should approach the lumpers and other ancillary workers with a request to withdraw their labour, as a gesture of sympathy for the fishermen.⁷³

Another offer of a pay increase, which had been obtained from negotiations between the AFVOA and union officials, was also rejected by the men. An overwhelming majority, according to the *Fishing News*, voted against accepting an offer which included an increase of 4s. 6d. per day on the basic rate, an increase in poundage of 11d. per one hundred pounds (this to be paid as a bonus on the completion of six months' service); a protective gear allowance of 8d. per day; a holiday pay increase of approximately 3d. per day and a form of decasualisation, in the shape of six months' guaranteed employment instead of the existing trip-by-trip system of engagement.⁷⁴ The employers claimed that the proposed settlement would have increased the weekly pay of deckcrews and engineers by £2. 11s. 9d.⁷⁵ One consequence of the strike was that higher prices were obtained by vessels (not from Aberdeen) for their catches at other ports.⁷⁶

Another offer was made by the AFVOA which the T & GWU officials recommended to the strikers at a mass meeting. This offer earned the approval of the officials since it raised the basic daily pay of deckhands and engineers from £2. 2s. 3d. to £2.18s. 0d. This too was rejected by a

two-thirds majority because it fell short of the demand for three pounds per day.⁷⁷ One trawler owner sent a letter to about one hundred men whom his company had employed, inviting them to meet him in his board-room to discuss the offer but the strike committee said that no one should attend, as the sender of the invitation would invite them to break the strike. In the event, ten engineers attended the meeting which proved to be inconclusive for both the owner and the engineers.⁷⁸

The stoppage, which led to several hundred ancillary workers being laid off and which the chief executive of the AFVOA claimed was having a disastrous effect on the economy of Aberdeen, continued despite the intervention of A.D. Shenton (National Fishing Liaison Officer) who, at a meeting attended by several hundred fishermen, urged the strikers to resume sailings. His advice and request for a resumption of work were ignored. When interviewed by *Fishing News*, the Labour MP for Aberdeen South, D. Dewar, who had had meetings with the employers, T & GWU officials and members of the strike committee, stated that it was very difficult for the government to intervene. *Fishing News* reported Dewar's remarks on the dispute:

"He (Mr. Dewar) did think however that there should be some sort of impartial inquiry as there had been a great deal of bad relations between the different sections of the industry for some time.He thought the fishermen deserved very good pay but the question was whether the industry could afford it."⁷⁹

Throughout the dispute only two vessels sailed and both were "blackened" by the T & GWU. One of these vessels

landed its catch at a small port in the Moray Firth but the other could not sell its catch when it returned to Aberdeen. In the event, the proceeds of both catches were given to charities. Fifty per cent of the gross receipts was donated to the RNLI and the remainder went to a local hospital. There was some trouble between pickets and the crews of small vessels who landed their fish at the Aberdeen market but the strikers maintained a disciplined code of conduct.⁸⁰

The stoppage was terminated in its tenth week when the men accepted a pay offer which met their demand for a daily rate of three pounds, which represented a rise of 17s. 9d. The *Fishing News* estimated that the stoppage had caused a loss to the industry and city of Aberdeen of some two million pounds. The observation was made that the settlement must have given the fishermen "a certain amount of satisfaction" and the stoppage must have appeared to them as a "worthwhile" action.⁸¹

Sentiments of a rather different kind were expressed in a letter written to the General Secretary of the T & GWU, J.L. Jones, by the Chairman of the 7/146 Aberdeen Fishermen's Branch (which incorporated a Deck Section Committee and an Engineers Section Committee), H. McCrae, who was a cook:

"Dear Jack,

After our great victory I must thank you personally and the General Executive Council in particular for the very generous support you accorded our branch in our long-drawn-out strike (*sic*). ...I know that you have been in close contact with the progress of the strike in all its stages and I hope you will agree it was a classic example of an industrial dispute. I feel sure that when Trade Union history is written it will be

seen to have done for the Trawling Industry in Britain what the London Dock Strike of 1889 did for industry in general.I need hardly add that none of our members will now sail with non-union labour. But it's no problem. The few stragglers can't sign the mandate fast enough and our strength is now well in the 1,000. I'm sure this will be a source of satisfaction both to you and the General Executive Council."⁸²

Whilst the outcome of the dispute pleased the members of the General Executive Council and the senior officials,⁸³ the claim, made by McCrae, of the importance of the dispute appears, in retrospect, to have been somewhat exaggerated. The settlement obtained by the Aberdeen fishermen, however, encouraged lay members and officials of the T & GWU in other ports to lodge pay claims with the respective employers' associations which were intended to narrow the differential which the Aberdeen men had widened with the pay settlement obtained from the AFVOA.

On 13th February of the following year, an official strike was called by the T & GWU in Hull, after some five months of negotiations over new pay rates and a closed shop agreement had reached a stalemate.⁸⁴ The union claimed to represent some 1,400 of the 1,600 strong workforce of deckhands, engineers and cooks; this was disputed by the HFVOA, the members of which claimed that the union had a membership of about 600, approximately forty per cent of the workforce.⁸⁵ Throughout the nine week long dispute, the employers were able to send vessels to sea crewed by non-trade unionists and/or those who were unwilling to continue the dispute. Some three weeks before

the end of the strike, the owners were making statements to the media that the strike was almost over. By the 18th March, the *Hull Daily Mail* stated that a total of 41 trawlers had sailed for the fishing grounds since the beginning of the strike.⁸⁶ On the 28th March, 1970, the *Hull Daily Mail* reported:

"Five more trawlers sailed from Hull for the fishing grounds today as owners claimed that the strike of crews is now almost over. ... On the face of it, the fact that 60 out of the port's fleet 90-odd distant-water trawlers have put to sea since the stoppage began would appear to give some grounds for the optimism of the owners."⁸⁷

During this dispute which appeared to be a somewhat disorderly affair, attempts were made to cast two trawlers adrift, albeit in the comparative safety of the fish dock.⁸⁸ Threats of violence were made against strike-breakers, and there were clashes between pickets and police, the latter making five arrests. One newspaper report contained the following:

"Trawler owners claimed that mob rule has taken over at the Fish Dock during the fishermen's strike. There were angry scenes last night as crews in coaches reported to the docks to take two trawlers to sea. Bus windows were smashed by an iron bar and a beer bottle flung by a striker bounced off and struck a policeman. Pickets shouted abuse and used obscene language at strike-breaking fishermen and once they broke through a strong cordon of docks police, swelled by reinforcements from the city police.....And today the trawler owners, through their association's president, Mr. Mike Burton, said that mob rule and violence had taken over. He claimed that strikers' feelings were whipped up by extreme Left Wing Socialists (*sic*) who were with the pickets. Union officials, he said, lost control of the situation and did not seem particularly bothered about it."⁸⁹

On the 14th April, those men still on strike, some seven hundred men, much less than half the workforce, agreed to accept a pay offer of £4. 4s. 0d. per week. On the issue of trade union membership, the employers and trade union agreed to a procedure which would allow the union representatives to interview new entrants to this section and to present them with a statement on the trade union policies and practices.⁹⁰ There is a marked contrast between the Aberdeen dispute and the stoppage in Hull in terms of the support given to the decision to withdraw labour, the solidarity of the membership during the dispute, the conduct of those taking part, and the outcome of the dispute. In interviews conducted by the author a number of officials and members of the fishing section of the T & GWU remarked upon the esteem enjoyed by the active members of the Aberdeen branch amongst their peers. In Hull, the branch had been moribund for more than twenty years.⁹¹

Between 1970 and 1975, pay and conditions of employment of fishermen were modified by way of the customary and institutionalised collective bargaining procedures but there was no concerted demand for a new campaign on the issue of decasualisation. There was a stoppage in Grimsby in 1970 over wages but, compared with the disputes in Aberdeen and Hull, it was a short-lived stoppage of a few days.

In June, 1970, the Aberdeen branch issued a statement in which branch members publicly dissociated themselves

from a group of fishermen who had advocated an unofficial stoppage to bring attention to grievances, concerning pay rates and the alleged failure of the T & GWU to bring about improvements in terms and conditions of employment. Part of the press statement issued by the branch was as follows:

"The Committee of 7/146 Deck and Engineers Branch deplore the action of some irresponsible persons who for reasons of their own are trying to disrupt the Fishing Industry. They entirely disagree (*sic*) with the allegations that nothing is being done for the fishermen by their union and would point out that since the termination of the strike last year fifteen improvements have been made to the agreement of 20th August, 1969.....It is their intention to still press for more improvements but this will be done in a proper and constitutional manner."93

Without the imprimatur of the branch, there was little or no possibility of an unofficial stoppage taking place at the port.

Other issues arose that brought about a worsening of the economic circumstances of this sector of the industry. The most important of these was the fisheries dispute between the UK and Iceland which lasted from July, 1971, to November, 1973,. A previous fisheries dispute between the two nations had ended with an Exchange of Notes on 11th March, 1961, at which moment the UK government withdrew its objections to the Icelandic extension to twelve miles (from four miles) of her fisheries limits. In July, 1971, the Icelandic government issued a policy statement which included the following passage:

"The Fisheries Agreements with the United Kingdom and the Federal German Republic shall be terminated and a resolution be made about an extension of the fishing limit up to 50 natural miles from the baselines, effective not later than 1st September, 1972."⁹⁴

The period covered by the Government's White Paper was from the beginning of that particular dispute to the institution of protection of British trawlers by vessels of the Royal Navy.⁹⁵ For over fifty years, the waters around Iceland had been the most important distant water fishing grounds for British trawlers operating mainly from Hull, Grimsby and Fleetwood, but with a few trawlers operating out of Aberdeen and North Shields. For several decades, the annual British catch had averaged approximately 170,000 metric tons of demersal fish, of which, in 1971, fully 75 per cent had been cod. During the period 1961-1971, the annual catches had been worth approximately £13 million, which figure represented about fifty per cent of the value of all British landings of demersal fish catches from distant-water grounds and some twenty per cent of all British landings of fresh and frozen fish. There were close to two hundred trawlers fishing these grounds in the nineteen sixties and early nineteen seventies, the overwhelming majority of which were side trawlers which had no facilities for freezing fish and hence were confined to voyages of not more than three weeks. The freezer trawlers were occasional visitors to Icelandic waters since their technology allowed them to fish other grounds in the North Atlantic. Given the serious depletion of fish stocks in other areas and the growing

restrictions imposed by internationally-agreed catch quotas, Icelandic attempts to curtail the activities and catches of British trawlers posed a formidable economic threat to the English ports of Hull, Grimsby and Fleetwood.⁹⁶

British trawlers were subjected to harassment by Icelandic coastguard vessels which, on instructions by the Icelandic government, sought to prevent the former from fishing within fifty miles of the coast. One method employed by the Icelandic vessels was to tow heavy cutting gear across, and a little distance behind, the stern of a trawler and by so doing sever the warps attached to the doors, gear and net (the doors and net of a large side trawler when fishing would be upwards of a mile astern and would take approximately twenty minutes to haul close to the vessel). Between 1st September, 1972, and 19th May, 1973, there had been fifty warp-cutting incidents with loss of gear, of an estimated value of £48,300, and several collisions between coastguard vessels and trawlers or Royal Navy vessels. In addition, the Icelanders had fired several rounds dangerously close to British trawlers.⁹⁷ Apart from the dangers attendant upon these encounters, normal fishing operations were disrupted to a quite considerable degree.⁹⁸

An agreement was reached between the two nations, which incorporated an acceptance by the UK government of a substantial reduction in the annual British catch in Icelandic waters. For its part, the T & GWU welcomed this

agreement even although it presented economic problems for the fishermen as well as their employers.⁹⁹

Jones and Shenton had had a number of meetings with leaders of the Icelandic Seamen's Union which proved fruitless but both officials were pleased to see a cessation of the hostile encounters, described above.¹⁰⁰

Throughout the world a growing demand arose amongst coastal nations for a revision of international law concerning territorial waters. At the third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea, held in Caracas, Venezuela, more than one hundred nations supported a resolution that called for the right of nations to establish Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of up to 200 miles from coastal baselines. When the Conference re-convened in Geneva, Switzerland, in May, 1975, agreement was reached concerning a Single Negotiating Text which enabled coastal nations to determine the rate of exploitation of living resources within the EEZ.¹⁰¹

Iceland, however, was not prepared to wait until the Law of the Sea Conference reached a definite statement on the exclusive right of coastal nations to the EEZ, since there was growing concern over the serious depletion of fish stocks in almost all of the grounds around the Icelandic coast.¹⁰² In October, 1975, shortly before the expiry date of the previous UK-Icelandic agreement, the Icelandic government announced an extension of fishing limits to 200 miles. Another fisheries dispute began but this time the British government did not challenge the right of the

Icelanders to extend the limits. The dispute centred upon a disagreement over the size of the quota of fish allocated to British trawlers. At one moment it appeared, as the dispute continued, that diplomatic relations between the two countries would be broken off but the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the American government intervened and an agreement was reached between the two countries.¹⁰³

The terms of the agreement proved near-ruinous for the ports of Hull and Fleetwood; Grimsby too suffered quite severely. In the Exchange of Notes between Iceland and the United Kingdom concerning Fishing in the Icelandic Fisheries Zone, Oslo, June 1, 1976, an agreement was reached which specified that only twenty-four British fishing vessels (mainly side-trawlers) drawn from a list of ninety-three, would be allowed into specified areas within Iceland's 200-miles fisheries limits. Any vessel found to be in breach of the stringent regulations concerning fishing areas or types of gear would be crossed off the list. It was also agreed that the Agreement would be of six months duration from the date of its entry into force.¹⁰⁴

It appeared to some observers somewhat ironic that the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs who negotiated and signed the Agreement was the MP for one of the ports most directly affected by its terms, namely C.A.R. Crosland, MP for Grimsby. In the Exchange of Notes Crosland made the following observation:

The United Kingdom government will invite the EEC to undertake negotiations with Iceland as soon as possible with a view to reaching a long term reciprocal fisheries agreement. If it is not possible for such an agreement to be concluded before the end of the six-months period, the United Kingdom government will invite the Community to make a bridging agreement under which British vessels would continue to fish at levels agreed with the Icelandic government."¹⁰⁵

In the event, the EEC and Iceland failed to reach an agreement and at the end of 1976 British trawlers were excluded from their traditional and important Icelandic fishing grounds. Crosland's observation concerning the role of the EEC demonstrates the significant consequences of EEC membership for the British fishing industry. When the UK, Ireland, Denmark and Norway sought membership of the EEC, they found *inter alia* that the original six member states had established a principle of equality of access by the fishing vessels of all member states to each member state's fishing grounds. For these member states the principle of equal access was of little significance since, with the exception of rather sparse stocks of shellfish, there are only meagre stocks of demersal and pelagic stocks.¹⁰⁶ For the three of the four applicants, however, equal access to fishing grounds constituted a major problem *vis-a-vis* their regionally important inshore fisheries (Denmark was the exception). After a national referendum was held, the Norwegian government withdrew its application for membership of the EEC.

Regulations concerning equal access and related matters were accepted by the EEC's Council of Ministers on the day (30th June, 1970) when negotiations commenced between the

EEC and the four applicants. When the UK signed, along with Ireland and Denmark, the Treaty of Accession in 1972, they had to accept a Common Fisheries Policy that was based on negotiations in which they had taken no part.¹⁰⁷ Some concessions were obtained by the UK concerning the restriction of access within six miles of the UK coastal baselines to UK fishermen only. In a further six-miles band, from six to twelve-miles from these baselines, the right to fish was confined to UK fishing vessels and vessels from those EEC nations which had habitually operated in those areas within that band. This derogation from the regulations governing equal access to all areas was to last for ten years from 1972. Mrs. P.W. Birnie (a lecturer in international law) has observed:

"It has.....to be remembered that the UK is a party to the Treaty of Rome, and bound by it, and that if no alternative is negotiated it will after 1982 have in perpetuity to offer equal access to other Member States even within the 12-mile belts."¹⁰⁸

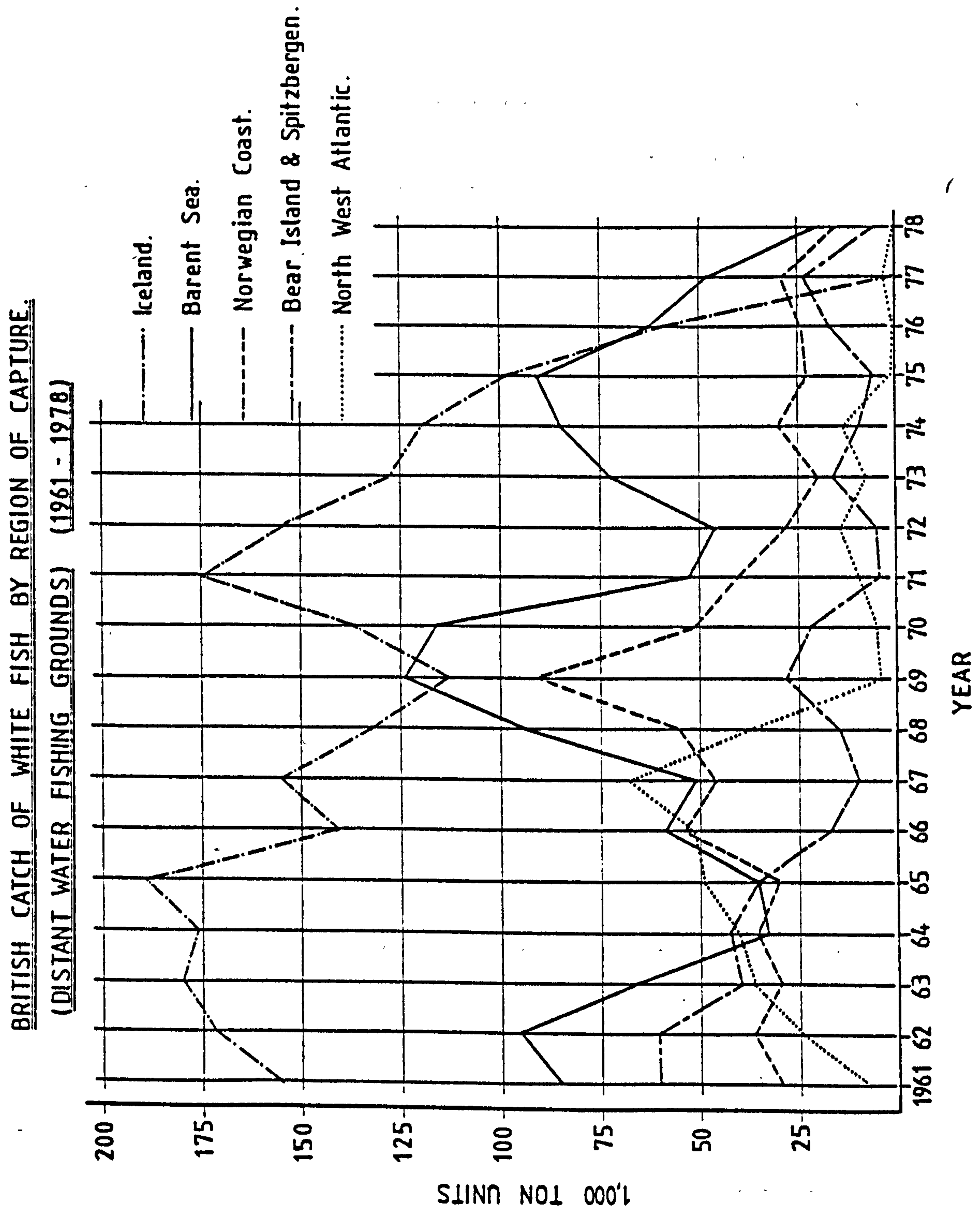
With the extension to 200 miles of the UK's territorial waters (see Map 1 p.7) under the terms of the Fishery Limits Act, 1976, a vast area embracing some rich fishing grounds has become subjected to the requirement of equal access. This extension of the limits, however, has not eased the plight of the trawler companies since the UK, as a member state, is bound by the regulations established by the EEC. For example, the non-discriminatory equal access provision, conservation policies and the division of Total Allowable Catches (TAC)

are all determined by the Community. Moreover, as Crosland's note acknowledges, the EEC insists that negotiations with third states, e.g. Iceland, Norway, Canada and the USSR, must be conducted by the Community. If the UK had chosen to remain outside the EEC, it would have been able to determine the TAC in its extensive waters (from which over sixty percent of all the fish caught in the joint EEC waters are taken) and give the surplus to its own catching power to the vessels of other states. As Mrs. Birnie points out, the UK could have gradually extended its own TAC,¹⁰⁹ which would have been of considerable compensation in respect of the losses incurred by the exclusion of British trawlers from North Atlantic fishing grounds.

The consequences of the removal of British trawlers from once-traditional grounds allied with the massive increase in operational costs which were due in the main to the decision of the OPEC member-states' decision to raise oil prices in late 1973; the inflationary rise in the costs of equipment and gear, and poor first-hand prices for the catches obtained, brought about a continuation of the decline in the distant-water segment of the catching sector (see Figure 8, British Catch of White Fish by Regions of Capture for the Period 1961 to 1978, Table 30,

British Distant Water Trawlers Registered at 31st December, 1964-1980, and Figure 9, Number of Regularly Employed Fishermen at 31st December in Selected Ports, (1965-1979), pages 486, 487 and 488 respectively.

FIGURE 8



Source: Annual Reports of the WFA, 1961-1978.

TABLE 30

British Distant Water Trawlers Registered
at 31st December, 1964-1980

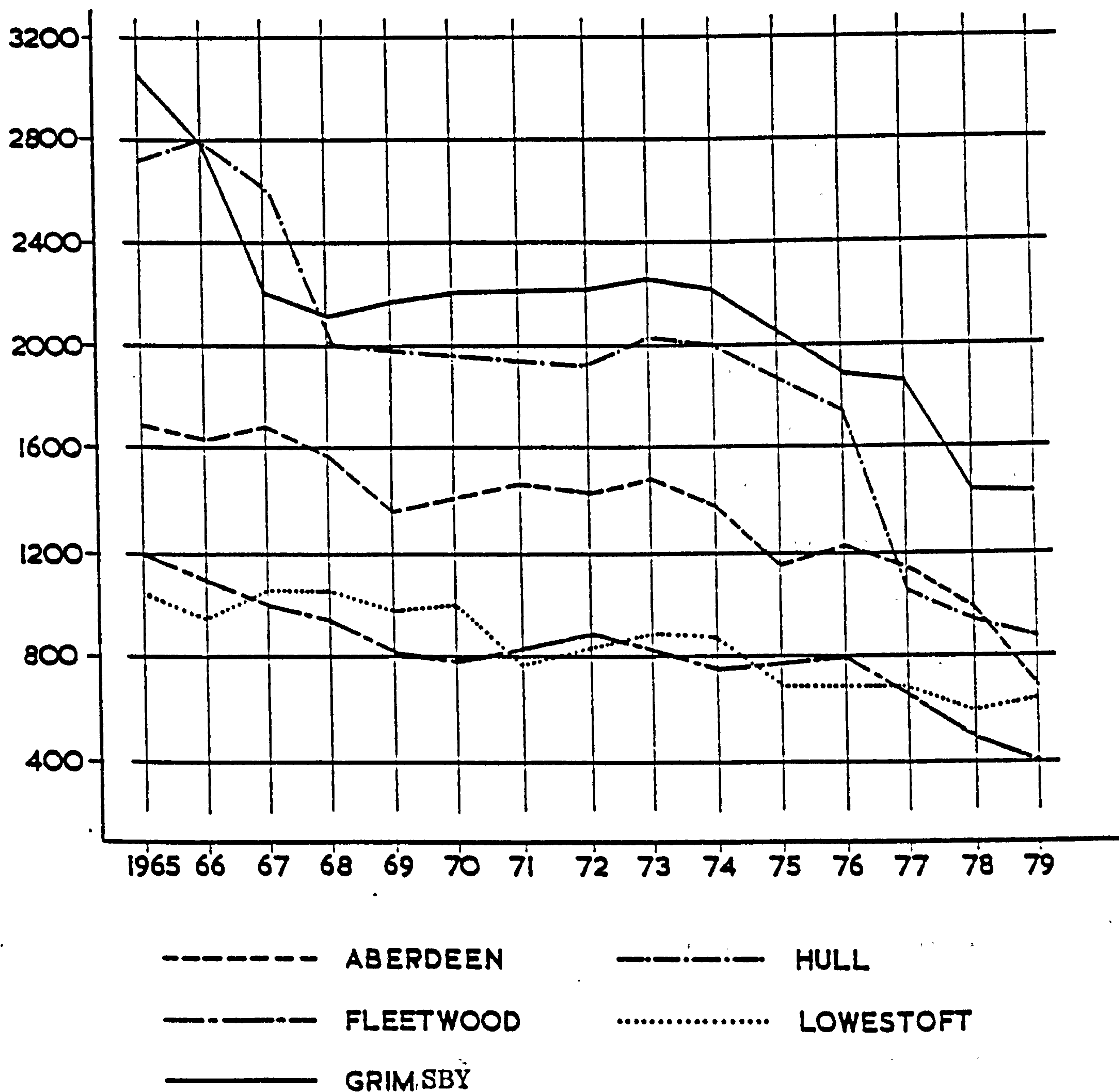
Year	Fresh Fish Trawlers a	Freezer and Factory Trawlers b
1964	196	7
1965	184	12
1966	174	25
1967	155	27
1968	133	32
1969	127	34
1970	125	36
1971	127	37
1972	127	41
1973	122	46
1974	115	48
1975	88	42
1976	62	41
1977	59	38
1978	44	34
1979	26	32
1980	20	30

Source: Annual Reports of the WFA, 1964-1980/81, Edinburgh.

- a) The overwhelming majority of these vessels are conventional side trawlers of 139 ft. in length or over.
- b) All of these vessels are stern trawlers of over 140 ft. in length or over.

FIGURE 9

Number of Regularly Employed Fishermen at 31st December in
Selected Ports (1965-1979)



Source: Based on information obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, London and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Edinburgh.

It was at this moment (beginning of 1976) that the T & GWU began a new campaign to end the casual system of employment of fishermen in the trawler companies. It was led by D.K. Cairns who succeeded A.D. Shenton as Regional Secretary of No.10 Region and National Fishing Liaison Officer in late 1974. Cairns, a Glaswegian, with many years of experience of Clydeside industries, as a worker and a trade union activist, also possessed a detailed knowledge of other industries, which he had gained as a full-time official with the T & GWU.

When appointed to his Hull-based office, Cairns had no experience and very little knowledge of the fishing industry; nevertheless he co-ordinated the union's policy and strategy on decasualisation in a more radical way than his predecessors. With the active encouragement of Jones and the approval of the General Executive Council, his regional and district councils, Cairns with a small cadre of district officials with fishing responsibilities in the ports, and the only active trade union branch (7/146 Aberdeen), formulated a policy on decasualisation and then devised a strategy to obtain this objective.

Under the direction of Cairns two documents were published by the T & GWU, the first of which was entitled "T & GWU Policy Statement on the Decasualisation of the Fishing Industry" (see Appendix 9, p.605) and the second was given the title "T & GWU National Fishing Policy Document No.2" (see Appendix 10, p.631). Cairns persuaded his fellow officials to employ the NDLB, rather

than the NMB, as a model for a system of employment for the trawler company sector.¹¹⁰ All of the officials readily agreed to this approach and it was accepted by the activists in Aberdeen, who were quite willing to follow Cairns, an official for whom they had deep respect as a negotiator and a leader.¹¹¹

The first document presented the union's case for a change in the employment relationship between fishermen and their employers. Contained within this comprehensive document, were numerous criticisms of labour relations and maritime labour legislation. The document emphasised the union's support for recommendations made by the Holland-Martin Report but was severely critical of the port registration schemes that had been established in some of the ports:

".....the (registration) schemes are not properly speaking jointly controlled, nor do they provide for regular and continuous employment, nor do they ensure that there is any control over the total size of the Register.Indeed in the Grimsby case, we find that many of the specifically casual elements in the trawler employment tradition are actually written into the Scheme.The Scheme is defined as the *Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association Registration Scheme*; it cannot therefore be described as a scheme 'under joint control'.....whilst priority of employment is accorded to Union members under the Scheme, there are numerous references to the limitation of this commitment, including a requirement that Union men will not object to sailing with non-Union men and 'conscientious objectors'."112

Following the critical examination of the industry, the document gave an explanation for its rejection of the MNB as a model employment scheme. This decision was

based on the objective of bringing the fishermen closer to land-based labour legislation and labour practices. In other words, the union officials concerned dissociated themselves from the perspective which placed fishermen and other seafarers in a separate and unique working environment with its separate and distinctive labour legislation and labour practice.¹¹³ This was a radical departure from the traditional view of trade unionists towards fishermen.

An outline discussion is given of dock-work before and after full decasualisation in 1967. The claim is made that:

"There is a great deal of misunderstanding about labour relations in the docks industry; the Union's experience indicates very clearly that the security of employment enjoyed by the individual docker has facilitated the introduction of modern methods of cargo-handling to a very considerable degree. There is no doubt that productivity in cargo-handling rose very sharply following the introduction of the Devlin reforms and full decasualisation after 1967".¹¹⁴

Most of the remainder of the document is concerned with a "general outline" of the union proposals for a National Labour Board for Fishing (NLBF).

Policy Document No.2 had the sub-title 'An Employment Scheme for Wage-Earning Fishermen' which closely resembled the extant system of employment in the docks industry under the auspices of the NDLB. For example, the document envisaged the creation of a NLBF and local or port boards which in terms of structure, functions, constitution, and membership, resembled in some detail

the NDLB and local dock labour boards. Representation would be divided equally between employers' representatives and trade union representatives with independent chairmen. The fishermen when performing their board duties were to receive remuneration equal to their average earnings.¹¹⁵

Where the policies and functions of the national board were concerned the document observed:

"Given that the major objects of the proposed Employment Scheme are to maintain regularity, and security of employment and the efficient performance - and safety - of registered fishing vessels, the Board should pursue such policies, operations and activities as might further these ends."¹¹⁶

The document goes on to state:

"The major functions of the National Board should include those policy-decisions, operations and activities which would..... determine and define the criteria for the standardisation of terms and conditions, and fair practices of employment, such as wages, duties and responsibilities, hours of work, rest periods, holiday entitlement, discipline and grievance procedures, paid leave of absence, unpaid leave of absence, trade-union representation etc. These criteria, where possible, should be based upon standards and practices obtaining in other industries but not necessarily other maritime industries.grant or refuse to a registered employer permission to terminate - or suspend - the employment of a registered fisherman.maintain the employers' register and where circumstances require remove from - or introduce to - the Register those employers who warrant such action."¹¹⁷

It will be seen from the above juxtaposed quotation, that the document reflected, what may fairly be said to be, a radical perspective, and if successfully implemented, that implementation would have constituted a radical departure in terms of both maritime labour legislation

and labour relations. It could also be said that thirty years after the abrogation of the EW (Trawler-Fishing) Order the T & GWU had a comprehensive policy on decasualisation which, in principle and specificity of detail, went far beyond previous policies and statements concerning port registration schemes.

Armed with these two policy documents, Cairns and his colleagues developed a strategy which took in the normal collective bargaining processes, and active support from other sections of the T & GWU and other trade unions with members in the ancillary areas of the industry. The assistance of T & GWU sponsored MPs was seen as important, particularly in light of their wholly successful endeavours in securing amendments to the Merchant Shipping Act, 1970. In this sphere, Cairns received considerable and skilled support from K. McNamara, MP, and the Labour MP for Hull East, J. Prescott, who had been elected to the House of Commons in 1970 and was the first NUS-sponsored MP for some seventy-odd years.¹¹⁸ Also, Cairns, with the active support of Jones, his General Secretary, sought to enlist the support of Labour cabinet ministers.

It can be readily seen why Cairns and his colleagues attempted to gain the sympathy of Labour ministers in their endeavours. Given the close relationship that exists between the Labour Party and the trade union movement and the often close relationships between Labour Party leaders and trade union leaders, it was not difficult for Cairns and Jones to secure meetings with cabinet ministers.

The timing too appeared propitious since the Labour government had repealed the Industrial Relations Act, 1971, under the terms of the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act, 1974. In addition, the government had enacted other labour legislation, namely the Employment Protection Act, 1975, and the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Act, 1976. A sympathetic response was anticipated by Cairns and other union officials to their requests for meetings with the ministers involved in the fishing industry to discuss the union's policy.

Crouch in his book, *'The Politics of Industrial Relations'*, made the following observation on the relationship between organised labour and the Labour administration in the period following the general election of 1974:

".....it is important to note that British unions have for the first time placed their faith in legal and state-sponsored organisations for securing their rights and powers. This represents a tremendous shift in position since the mid-1960s when they argued so strenuously before Donovan (the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations) for a highly voluntarist system. The change probably reflects three things; the unions' new confidence - after the conflict over the Industrial Relations Bill, 1969, the Industrial Relations Act, 1971, and the mining dispute of 1973-4 - that they can overcome attempts at using state power against them and that they run less risk than they used to believe of getting the worst of legal intervention- their realisation that complete state abstention from industrial relations has become a thing of the past and that they should instead try to ensure that the inevitable involvement would serve their own interests and, perhaps most important, their uniquely powerful political position after the events of 1969 and 1972-4".119

There is a considerable measure of agreement between Crouch's interpretation of these events and circumstances

surrounding the relationship between capital, labour and the state and that offered by Middlemas:

"There is no doubt that the price of the Labour Party's peace with the TUC involved legislative measures which substantially increased the special status of trade unions at law, first recognised in 1960. The balance of power in industry shifted further to the detriment of employers and management."120

Cairns, often accompanied by Jones, had numerous meetings with cabinet ministers during the period 1976-1979. Refusals were rare but many of the meetings appeared somewhat inconclusive and others led to recrimination. For example, after a meeting with two ministers in 1976, Cairns appeared to have a view of the discussion, which took place at the meeting, which was not shared by the ministers. Cairns wrote a letter to each of his "fishing officials" (the district officers with duties in the fishing industry) which contained the following passage:

"Following last night's meeting with Senior Ministers of the Government, I have to inform you that the government, mainly in the name of F. Peart and T. Crosland have reneged on the promise given to me to decasualise the industry, or indeed to set up the machinery to do so.....Once again it appears that when dealing with politicians one must accept that lies are an acceptable way to do business, however alien that may be to us."121

One success that Cairns achieved arose from his successful advocacy of the T & GWU decasualisation policy at two conferences of the Industrial Transport Workers' Federation (ITWF). The principle was adopted unanimously by the Fishermen's Section of ITWF and became part of the

charter for maritime labour legislation and practice.¹²² Another useful accomplishment was brought about by the decision of the members of the GSDFVE & FU to merge with the T & GWU. A ballot of the 210 membership of the union, which had once been as high as 1,200, was held, and of the 113 voting papers that were returned 103 (91%) voted in favour of amalgamation, 7 voted against and 3 papers were defaced.¹²³ At the first meeting of the new Grimsby engineers' branch of the T & GWU held at Grimsby, members present voiced their unanimous support for the union's decasualisation policy.¹²⁴

It was felt by Cairns and his fellow officials that the procrastination of ministers and their departmental officials hindered the progress that the T & GWU sought; nevertheless Cairns and Jones continued to seek meetings with the ministers in the hope of gaining their support in the negotiations they were anxious to conduct with the employers over the issue of decasualisation. Shortly after the Seventh Annual Conference of the Fishing Section, held in London in June, 1976, Jones suggested to the government that a 'Special Tripartite Trawler Fishing Committee' be convened, with employers' representatives, trade union representatives and state officials. This committee, Jones argued, could a) develop joint policies on the deployment of the displaced British distant-water fleet, b) tackle the problems of fishing limits and c) as a priority, establish a decasualisation scheme for this sector.¹²⁵

On the issue of decasualisation Jones informed his General Executive Council that:

".....accompanied by Brother Cairns, I met the Minister of State for Employment, H. Walker, and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and they will now meet the employers. Following that there will be a joint meeting, in the knowledge that the Ministers recognise the need for security of employment and an ordered manpower policy for this industry."¹²⁶

Prevailed upon to do so by ministers and the T & GWU, the national employers' associations, which by now had the title British Fishing Federation (BFF), which replaced the former title of British Trawling Federation (BTF), produced in 1977 a set of proposals on decasualisation that differed quite markedly from those contained in the union's two documents (see Appendix 11, p. 649). The British Fishing Federation's Proposals for a Decasualisation Scheme for Fishermen). The BFF document was sent to the T & GWU and a copy was given to the Minister of State at the Department of Employment. In his evidence to the Trade and Industry Sub-Committee, of the Expenditure Committee of the House of Commons, which conducted an examination of the fishing industry in the period 1976-1978, one Hull trawler company director, A. Marr, claimed that the BFF scheme was a "slightly watered down variant" of the scheme proposed by the T & GWU and that it had been presented to the union and government ministers for discussion.¹²⁷ When questioned about the BFF scheme, Cairns informed the Committee that his union refused to consider it.¹²⁸

For its part, the Committee made the observation that at least initially the issue should be placed within the

context of the industry's collective bargaining process:

"Since the question is obviously delicate, and to some people emotive, it would be wrong for us to express a view of the relative merits of the two schemes..... We content ourselves with saying that since both sides accept the principle of at least some decasualisation, they should certainly discuss it to see whether agreement can be reached on a scheme whilst leaving till the end the question whether it should be voluntary or compulsory."129

This neutral stance reflected the position adopted by the government. When asked, in the House of Commons, by J. Prescott, MP for Hull East, what measures the government would take to end the casual employment in the fishing industry, the Minister of State at the Department of Employment replied thus:

"I have had discussions with representatives of the Union and the employers and have made it clear that I firmly believe that the best way to bring an end to the casual nature of employment in the fishing industry is through negotiated agreement between the two sides of the industry. I hope progress will be made in further discussions."130

It behove the BFF to demonstrate to a Labour administration and the T & GWU a degree of willingness to accept some decasualisation and to discuss its structure with union officials. For example, there was the question of financial assistance that the trawler companies had received from the state and there was a felt need, amongst trawler company directors, that financial compensation should be paid to their sector of the industry for the losses incurred in the exclusion of their vessels from traditional North Atlantic fishing grounds. There was also a need to be in a position of fishery advisers with ministers and their officials vis-a-vis reciprocal fishing agreements

between EEC member states and third countries. Moreover, it was becoming increasingly apparent that not only was there a downward shift in the relative importance of the BFF and the distant-water trawler companies in the fishing industry but the growing importance of the inshore sector, particularly in Scotland, was being recognised by inshore fishermen themselves who were becoming increasingly vociferous and militant.¹³¹ In Scotland, the AFVOA and the T & GWU represented a quite small segment of the Scottish fishing fleet. (See Map 4, p.503, Full-time Fishermen Employed in Scottish Fisheries Districts.)

The BFF approach to decasualisation was based *inter alia* on the following conditions and observations:

".....a substantial proportion of the fishermen in any port to which the scheme is to apply should be shown to desire decasualisation;

each fisherman concerned should be given the choice of decasualisation or remaining on the casual section of the register;

Her Majesty's government should permit unemployed decasualised fishermen to draw unemployment benefits while drawing topping up benefits, in a manner comparable to that under the MN Establishment Scheme;

each port's register of fishermen should consist of two parts, a casual section and a decasualised section (with the latter subdivided into company and port pools), with each person being free to move from one section or sub-section to the other, subject to the appropriate conditions contained in the scheme being satisfied;

it is a cardinal principle of decasualisation that each decasualised man shall accept all reasonable directions from his company or port association;

*In short, we propose a scheme which is strictly confined to the registration, employment and discharge of wage-earning fishermen.*¹³²

In support of its proposal for the casual and a decasualised section of a port registration scheme, the BFF offered the same observation of the fishermen that was used by the BTF in its memorandum to the Minister of Labour in 1946 which called for the abolition of the EW (Trawler Fishing) 0, 1943 (see the discussion in Chapter 7); reference was made to the individualistic nature of the fisherman and his resentment at any statutory imposition which might have infringed his traditional right to choose for himself both vessel and skipper. Thirty-one years later the BFF document on decasualisation offered the following observations:

"It is important to note, however, that the longer-term commitment which decasualisation implies is still disliked by a large majority of trawler officers and crews.Only a minority of fishermen at Aberdeen, and a diminishing number at that, accept company contracts. And.....it is increasingly the practice for deep sea fishermen generally to sign themselves off articles as employers allow articles to run on from trip to trip.The fact appears to be that the adventurous spirit, which is one of the chief characteristics of those who are attracted to the fishing industry, regards as irksome and indeed repugnant the restrictions which are the corollary of decasualised employment."¹³³

An alternative interpretation of the fishermen's attitude to casual employment was touched upon by the Holland-Martin Report. First of all, the Report suggested that the employers readily accepted the casual employment relationship.¹³⁴ In addition, the necessity for fishermen to regularly renew their Articles of Agreement might encourage

the attitude that their jobs were short-term in commitment.¹³⁵ Moreover, the Report added:

"The men wish to be able to sail with a vessel or crew of their choice; and the harsh and isolated conditions of work at sea probably lead many trawlermen to take occasional trips off and some to concentrate their work into the smallest practicable portion of the year."¹³⁶

A number of fishermen, when interviewed by the author, volunteered the information that they occasionally took a trip off for the reasons outlined above; however, several also stated that they had signed off vessels because of their resentment of the skippers' behaviour for ordering them to work in worsening weather conditions.¹³⁷ In other words, because of the constraints placed upon their industrial behaviour by the Merchant Shipping Acts, they had demonstrated their disapproval of insensitive management by withdrawing from the work place in the prescribed way, i.e. signing off Articles. They also complained of irresponsible conduct which might put a vessel in danger. For example, at a meeting of 7/146 branch, A. Shepherd, the Aberdeen Fishing Liaison Officer, informed the branch committee that:

".....it was very unfair for skippers and mates not being reported for being under the influence of drink, as in the past he had reported two skippers for this offence and nothing was ever done."¹³⁸

The T & GWU refused to discuss the BFF proposals because officials believed that the division between the two sides' proposals was so deep that it would have been a worthless exercise.¹³⁹ Apart from the criticism the

union made of some of the specific conditions laid down by the BFF, the union officials claimed that the proposed scheme offered by the employers was little different from the existent port registration schemes, e.g. the document ignored altogether the T & GWU's proposal that both employers and employees should be registered and hence subject to regulation by a jointly-controlled executive board.

At the first annual meeting of the Grimsby engineers' branch (10/3c) of the T & GWU, Cairns expressed anger at the employers and disappointment at government ministers. The minutes of the meeting record that:

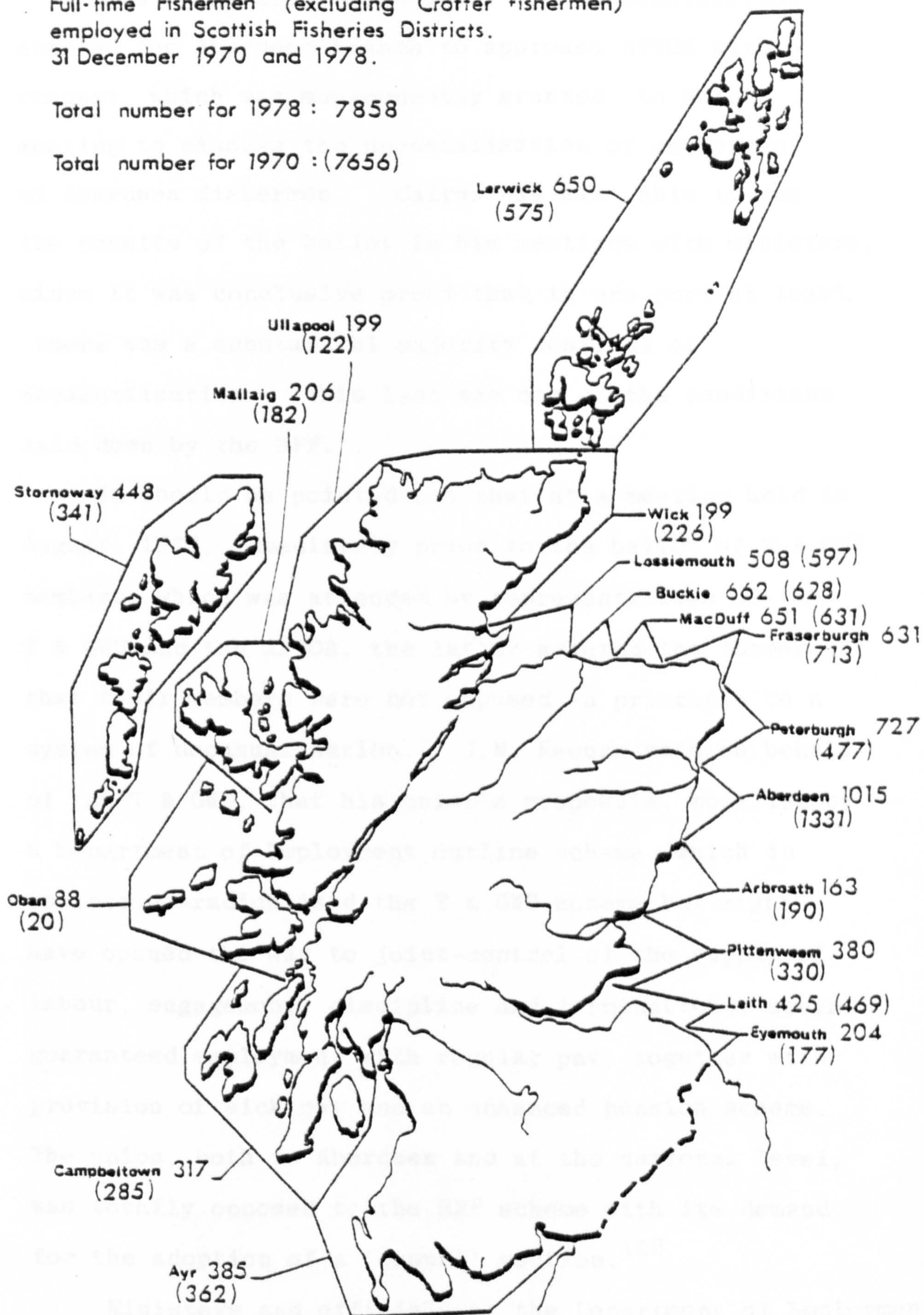
".....he went on to say that how bitterly disappointed he was and how he had been let down by government Ministers, when trying to get Decasualisation for the Fishing Industry accepted. However he urged members not to get despondent and lose heart.....he would need the strength and support of the Engineers 10/3c Branch to achieve this object."140

In Aberdeen a ballot was taken amongst fishermen who were asked if they would be prepared to strike in support of decasualisation. The author witnessed part of the balloting process which consisted, in the main, of A. Shepherd, with assistance from J.M. Keenan and several branch members, distributing ballot papers to fishermen on arrival or prior to departure from the fish dock. Ninety-four per cent of the union members took part in the ballot and the result, when checked and declared by a retired trade union official (formerly a trawler deckhand), indicated 671 members in favour of taking industrial action, 28 against with 2 defaced papers.¹⁴¹ See Appendix 14, p.664, 7/146 Branch Memorandum on the Decasualisation of the Fishing Industry and Ballot Paper.

Full-time Fishermen (excluding Crofter fishermen)
employed in Scottish Fisheries Districts.
31 December 1970 and 1978.

Total number for 1978 : 7858

Total number for 1970 : (7656)



This declaration of support for decasualisation enabled the Aberdeen branch to approach AFVOA with a request, which was subsequently granted, to hold a meeting to discuss the decasualisation of employment of Aberdeen fishermen. Cairns was also able to use the results of the ballot in his meetings with ministers, since it was conclusive proof that, in one port at least, there was a substantial majority desirous of decasualisation. This last was one of the conditions laid down by the BFF.

It should be pointed out that at a meeting held in August, 1978, immediately prior to the ballot of T & GWU members, which was attended by representatives of the T & GWU and the AFVOA, the latter assured the former that their members were not opposed in principle to a system of decasualisation. J.M. Keenan said, on behalf of the T & GWU, that his union's proposals, modified by a Department of Employment outline scheme (which in essence de-radicalised the T & GWU scheme but might have opened the way to joint-control of the supply of labour, engagement, discipline and termination), sought guaranteed employment with regular pay, together with provision of sick pay and an enhanced pension scheme. The union, both in Aberdeen and at the national level, was totally opposed to the BFF scheme with its demand for the adoption of a 'casual' section.¹⁴²

Ministers and officials at the Department of Employment were anxious to emphasise that the document sent by the department to the T & GWU and the BFF, should be treated

as a note that took into account discussions which ministers and officials had had with organisations. The document is, however, entitled a Draft Outline of a Scheme to Decasualise the Trawler Fishing Industry (see Appendix 12, p.658, Department of Employment Memorandum and Draft Outline of a Scheme to Decasualise the Trawler Fishing Industry). In terms of tone, form and content it would seem to be much closer to the BFF document than the T & GWU documents.

Keenan also made the observation that if a scheme were adopted at Aberdeen, the fishermen would not take part in any industrial action in support of such schemes at other ports. On behalf of the AFVOA, R.H. Cradock:

".....expressed the desire for an orderly programme of discussion and stressed that as it was a very radical change, time would have to be taken to change attitudes and deal with the matter properly. As far as Aberdeen (AFVOA) was concerned provided the obligations were properly accepted there would be no objection to decasualisation".¹⁴³

At a meeting of representatives of the two organisations, shortly after the ballot had been held and the results given to the media, disappointment was voiced by the AFVOA representatives that the union had gone ahead with the ballot despite the assurance given that the owners were willing to negotiate in good faith. A discussion took place that centred on the practical implications of a jointly-controlled registration scheme, which would be in advancement of any existent port registration scheme, and one that seemed to owe as much to the EW (Trawler Fishing) O, 1943 Trawler Scheme as it did to the vastly different

schemes proposed by the T & GWU and the BFF. No conclusions were reached at this meeting but both sides agreed to meet again following Keenan's disclosure that the members of 7/146 Branch had decided that if agreement was reached in Aberdeen, then what happened in other ports would be deemed of no concern and there would be no industrial action to support T & GWU action elsewhere.¹⁴⁴

One of the difficulties with which the T & GWU was faced in its attempts to change employment practices was the array of state departments that had some involvement in the industry. For example, the discussions conducted by Cairns, Keenan and others on the issue of decasualisation, were with the Department of Employment, with some minor involvement of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries but the Department of Health and Social Security had to be brought in because of the 'topping up' question. By 'topping up' is meant the additions made to unemployment benefit payments received by, say, seamen when unemployed. As the earlier discussion has demonstrated, however, the department most closely concerned historically with maritime labour legislation and employment was the Department of Trade (Maritime Division), formerly the Board of Trade.

In the midst of the union's attempts to improve the fishermen's working conditions, the Department of Trade announced that on the basis of the Report of the Working Group on Discipline in the Fishing Industry, 1975, penal sanctions would be incorporated in a new Merchant Shipping Act to deal with the problem of drunkenness in the trawler fleets owned by the trawler companies.¹⁴⁵ Jones protested

to the Prime Minister about this decision to employ maritime law to deal with a problem which, he maintained, could best be dealt with by the industry itself through mutually agreed disciplinary procedures, i.e. port disciplinary committees.¹⁴⁶ It was the view of the union that these committees were the most effective way of dealing with the problems of discipline, including the contentious issue of the possession of illicit liquor on board a vessel.

The experience of the Aberdeen Port Disciplinary Committee (see Appendix 15, p.666) supported the case that Jones put to the Prime Minister. At a meeting of 7/146 Branch held some fourteen months after the Working Party on Discipline submitted its Report to the Secretary of State for Trade, P. Shore, members expressed their satisfaction with the work of the disciplinary committee, the secretary reporting that:

".....the disciplinary procedure was working very well, as there had been a sharp drop in the disciplinary cases for the last 2 months."¹⁴⁷

It would appear that Labour ministers at the Department of Trade preferred the views of their departmental officials and despite Jones's protest to the Prime Minister, a clause was inserted into the Merchant Shipping Act, 1979, to the effect that a person found guilty, by due process of law, of being in possession of unauthorised liquor on board a fishing vessel could face a fine of up to £1,000 or a term not exceeding two years in gaol, or both.¹⁴⁸

There were some ministers who appeared to be more sympathetic to the union's case for decasualisation. For

example, the author attended a meeting of 7/146 Branch, at the T & GWU's District Office in Aberdeen, which was attended by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, J. Silkin, a T & GWU-sponsored MP, who had succeeded F.R. Peart. The minister, when questioned on the subject, expressed his support for the union but he also pointed out to those present that it was a matter for the Department of Employment and the Department of Trade and not his department.¹⁴⁹

In a speech, at a trade union rally at Grimsby, in 1978 Jones talked of the growing disquiet of the union over the failure to make progress on decasualisation:

".....the Union's claim that an adequate employment scheme has been frustrated by negative attitudes and delays has created a feeling of despondency amongst deep-sea trawlermen and their families.The Union repeats its demand, in the name of humanity, for deep-sea trawlermen to be given regular employment with the guarantee of adequate payments during periods when they are not at sea. The government must take action urgently. There is no justification for any further dilly-dallying. The employers of the industry have failed their workers. Only the government can make the necessary changes that will provide reasonable standards for these men and their families."¹⁵⁰

Later in 1978, Jones and Cairns at a meeting with the Secretary of State for Employment, A. Booth, and the Minister of State at the Department of Employment, H. Walker, argued the case for both decasualisation and compensation for those fishermen who had become unemployed at the major ports. The overwhelming majority of these men could not claim redundancy payments because of the unstable pattern of

their employment in the industry. Short terms of engagement placed them outside the terms of the labour legislation, enacted by Labour administrations, to protect employees and if they were made redundant, to ensure that they should receive some financial compensation. Those laws, however, were designed for land-based workers and not those employed in the catching sector of the fishing industry.¹⁵¹

All the efforts to persuade the Labour administration to impose a decasualised system of employment on the trawler companies came to nought. The changes in employment practices, terms and conditions of employment of fishermen, which were effected during the period 1974-1979, resulted from the institutionalised collective bargaining processes and not by state intervention encouraged by Labour ministers. There was one significant exception, however, and that was in the area of shipboard discipline and safety (already discussed), involving the introduction of penal sanctions in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1979, to be employed against those fishermen convicted of being in possession of unauthorised liquor on their vessels. The leadership of the Labour Party, however, made a promise, in the Labour Party Election Manifesto, that the next Labour government would:

"Continue to demand a Common Fisheries Policy that gives preference in our own waters to a strong British fishing industry - betrayed by the last Tory government - with a secure future. We will continue to take, and enforce, national measures to conserve stock. We shall complete the process of decasualisation."¹⁵²

After the general election, T & GWU officials sought meetings with Conservative ministers at the Department of Employment but these proved to be fruitless. Other ministers refused to meet delegations of T & GWU fishermen-members. Two letters sent by J.M. Keenan, who succeeded to the post of National Fishing Liaison Officer, on the resignation of D.K. Cairns from his employment with the union (4.5.1980), but who remained in his post as a district officer in Aberdeen, illustrate the failure of the union's campaign for decasualisation. In one letter to the Secretary of State at the Department of Employment (J. Prior), Keenan complained that:

"the decasualisation of trawl fishermen seems as far away as it ever was,"¹⁵³

and in the second letter (to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries (P. Walker) Keenan voiced his regret at the refusal of the minister to meet a delegation:

"I am bound to say that I find this most disappointing though perhaps not surprising.
The Fishermen who have faced the perils of the sea for many years only to find themselves cast on the human scrap heap and then ignored must indeed be justified in the bitterness they now feel.
I can only note your decision and inform the wage-earning fishermen represented by this Union that once again they must accept that their interests have been given a low priority."¹⁵⁴

In June 1980, the delegates at the Eleventh Annual Fishing Conference, held in Fleetwood, were informed that there were less than 1,000 trawler-crew members in the major fishing ports. In Aberdeen there were approximately 650 members, in Hull there were about 200 while Grimsby had a current membership of 93.¹⁵⁵ A.W. Sandford, the

Grimsby district official with responsibilities for fishing, and a former activist in the defunct GSDFVE & FU, in his report to the conference commented:

"The only comment I wish to make on decasualisation and redundancy payments is to express my concern as to the general feeling amongst our members when I speak on the subject. It is with regret that I say that they are now treating this as a joke, and pie in the sky; they are quoting my own words back in 1976, when I reported that we had received catagoric assurances from Peart and Crosland (*sic*) that the government would decasualise the industry, and that redundancy payments or some form of compensation would be made available to fishermen who had lost their jobs. I have been trying to reassure them ever since."156

The campaign to decasualise the employment relationship between the fishermen and the trawler companies had quietly foundered amidst the decline of this segment of the catching sector of the industry.

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1. A perusal of articles on the loss of the three vessels, other vessel losses, the working conditions of fishermen and related subjects, which appeared in popular and quality newspapers and periodicals in the period January to April, 1968, seemed to demonstrate considerable sympathy for the fishermen and some antipathy towards their employers. See, for example, *Private Eye*, 5th January, 1968; *Tribune*, 9th February, 1968; *New Statesman*, 9th February, 1968; *New Society*, 8th February, 1968; *Daily Mirror*, 6th February, 1968; *Guardian*, 6th February, 1968 (and numerous other articles throughout February and March); *Observer*, 11th February, 1968; and *Sunday Times*, 11th February, 1968. All of these publication were critical of the working conditions of the fishermen, the industry's industrial relations and maritime legislation. In addition, criticisms were made of the T & GWU's apparent past failures to improve the terms and conditions of employment of its fishermen-members - see *New Society*, 8th February, 1968.
2. *Sunday Times*, 4th February, 1968.
3. *Observer*, 4th February, 1968. Mrs. Bilocca was a manual worker employed in a fish processing plant close to the fish dock in Hull. She was, however, dismissed from her employment in late February, 1968, for absenteeism. (*Guardian*, 20th February, 1968).
4. A seafarers' chapel.
5. A deckhand-learner usually began work in the galley and then after, say, six trips he would be signed on as a member of the deckcrew.
6. *Guardian*, 3rd February, 1968.
7. *Guardian* 5th February, 1968.
8. *Guardian*, 10th February, 1968.
9. *Guardian*, 6th February, 1968.
10. *Guardian*, 14th February, 1968.
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19. *Final Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety*, Cmnd.4114, HMSO, July, 1969.
20. R.S.F. Schilling, '*Trawler Fishing - an extreme occupation*', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, Vo.59, 1966, p.405.
21. Until 1970, trawlers crews had to provide their own protective clothing, e.g. oil-frocks, sou'westers, thigh boots, guernseys, gutting gloves and sea-boot woollen stockings. They also had to supply their own bedding, i.e. mattress, sheets, blankets and pillows. In Hull, protective clothing, bedding and other accessories could be purchased from a shop, situated on the fish dock, which was owned by the HFVOA. At the completion of a voyage, the bill for the purchases was met from poundage.
22. Item 8, '*The Fishermen's Charter*', T & GWU, Transport House, London, 1968.
23. *Guardian*, 25th January, 1968. Fo'c'sle is the generic term to indicate the living space of the crew in the forward end of the vessel below the forecastle deck.
24. Appendix XIII, *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and F & GP Comm.*, Vol.XLVI, 1968, p.132.

25. *Minutes of a meeting held on 17th April, 1968, Minutes Book for 1968, GSDFVE & FU, Grimsby.*
The italicised sections are heavily underlined in the original text.
26. *Minutes of a meeting 22nd June, 1966, Minutes Book for 1966, GSDFVE & FU, Grimsby.*
27. Jones continued to play an important role in this sphere of maritime industrial relations, even when he became General Secretary of the union in 1969.
28. On one Aberdeen stern trawler, on which the author sailed, all the crew, with the exception of the skipper (some twelve men in all) paid tribute to their activist trade-union colleagues. Not one of these men had attended a branch meeting in two years; the mate (or second-hand) had refused to join the Aberdeen Skippers' and Mates' Association on becoming a trawler officer but, instead, had elected to continue his membership of the T & GWU.
29. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* p.3. See also R. Anderson, *op.cit.* pp.128-136.
30. *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety, para.237, p.97.*
31. In a meeting that the author had with a group of Hull deckhands (seven), all agreed with the observation, made by one of their number, that skippers and mates were "gaffers' men".
32. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and F & GP Comm., T & GWU. Vol.XLVII, 1969, Min.159, p.43.*
33. *ibid.*, Min.410, p.131. The T & GWU did not have local officials responsible only for the catching sector of the fishing industry. A district officer of the T & GWU has, in most cases, a wide range of industries within his brief. For example, J.M. Keenan, a district official in the Aberdeen District of the Scottish Region (No.7) of the T & GWU has to advise and assist the Aberdeen Engineers' and Deckhands' Branch (7/146) but he has also the same duties to perform in respect of the lumpers, ice-making operatives, box-makers, net-menders, and fish-process workers. In addition to this work in the Aberdeen fishing industry, he carries out similar work in relation to registered dockers and boatmen in Aberdeen, the skippers, mates,

engineers and deckcrews of safety, rescue and 'standby' vessels in the offshore oil industry, other maritime workers in Peterhead and Fraserburgh, road transport workers in Aberdeen and the surrounding area, process and maintenance workers at the oil terminals at Flotta, Orkney and Sullom Voe, Shetland. His geographical area - apart from his work in Orkney and Shetland - extends from Laurencekirk to Elgin and inland into the Spey Valley (where he represents manual workers in three whisky distilleries). Keenan is responsible for about 4,500 members. Added to these responsibilities, he has membership of a number of committees, e.g. the Grampian Region Fisheries Committee, the Council of the Sea Fish Industry Authority, the Sea Fisheries Training Council, and two EEC fisheries committees. Keenan assures me that the above is not an exhaustive list. (Personal communication with permission to quote). Keenan's widely dispersed activities and responsibilities contrast rather markedly with those of NUS district officials in 1974 there were 93 of these officials, one for every 480 members. In that year the average ratio of official to members for all British trade unions was one for every 3,800 members. J. McConville, *op.cit.* footnote 1, p.79.

34. H. Wilson, 'The Labour Government 1964-1970: A Personal Record', Weidenfeld and Nicolson and Michael Joseph, London, 1971, p.495.
35. The T & GWU had negotiated an agreement with the Grimsby and Hull trawler companies operating the stern freezer-trawlers which *inter alia*, ensured that deckcrews worked a watch of twelve hours followed by a rest period of six hours. This meant that these crews had eight hours off in twenty-four. In addition the work on a stern trawler whilst still arduous and dangerous, in comparison with land-based manual work, is less so than on a side-trawler where the deckcrews are on duty for eighteen hours a day. See *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety*, paras.144-146, pp.59-60.
36. A ship's log, or log book, is a compulsory document in which a vessel's master records information concerning the navigation of the vessel, activities of the vessel, organisation of the crew, any incidents that arise and other relevant activities. See P. Kemp, *op.cit.* pp.493-494.
37. *Report of Inquiry into Trawler Safety*, para.247, pp.101-102.
38. *ibid.* para.247, pp.101-102.

39. *ibid.* paras.248-249, p.102.
40. J. Tunstall, *op.cit.* p.19.
41. *op.cit.*, para.35, p.iii.
42. *ibid.* paras. 1-83, pp.1-7.
43. *ibid.* para.244, p.100.
44. *The T & GWU and Holland-Martin*, T & GWU, London, 1969.
45. *ibid.*
46. *op.cit.* paras.185-186, pp.74 and 75.
47. *ibid.* paras.152-161, pp.63-66.
48. *ibid.* para.167, pp.68-69.
49. *ibid.* para.237, p.
50. *ibid.* para.234, p.96. The T & GWU had voiced numerous complaints against the 'Silver Cod' Trophy which was awarded by the BTF to the trawler skipper whose vessel had the highest annual catch of fish. The union's complaint was that pursuit of this award might tempt a skipper to fish in dangerous weather. The uncritical acceptance of this competition was demonstrated by the decision of a local brewery to name a new public house in Hull, 'The Silver Cod'.
51. *ibid.* para.235, pp.96-97.
52. *ibid.* para.199, p.81.
53. *ibid.* para.253, p.104.
54. *ibid.* paras.254-155, p.104.
55. *ibid.* para.248, p.102.

56. *ibid.* paras.247-250, pp.101-103.
57. *ibid.* para.249, p.102.
58. *ibid.* para.251, p.103.
59. See, for example, the *Final Report of the Court of Inquiry into certain matters concerning the Shipping Industry*, Cmnd.3211, HMSO, London, 1967. McConville is, perhaps, an exception but then he is a former merchant seaman of twenty years experience.
60. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.325.
61. H. Wilson, *op.cit.* p.495.
62. *Min. & Rec. of Gen.Exec.Counc. and F & GP Comm*, Vol.XLVII, 1969, Min.411, p.145.
63. J. Ellis and R.W. Johnson, *op.cit.* p.16,
64. Kitchen observed that the debates on the Bill, which were composed of personal reminiscences and generalities, were mainly concerned with discipline, followed by wages and safety, J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* pp.318-319.
65. Sch.2, Part 1, 4(1), *Merchant Shipping Act, 1970*.
66. Sch.2, Part 1, 4(1), *ibid.* This power was rarely used to the advantage of either those working in the engine room or on the deck.
67. J. Ellis and R.W. Johnson, *op.cit.* pp.16-17.
68. J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.319.
69. *The Times*, 3rd April, 1969.
70. *Fishing News*, 2nd June, 1969.
71. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and F & GP Comm*, Vol.XLVII, 1969, Min528, p.185.
72. *Fishing News*, 4th July, 1969.

73. *ibid.*
74. Under part IV of the *Merchant Shipping Act, 1894*, the skipper or owner of a fishing vessel of twenty-five tons or more had to enter a written agreement with all members of the crew. This agreement covered manning scales on board, discipline, pay and food. Articles of Agreement automatically expired after six months but owners or their employees could terminate them on completion of any voyage. See *Report of the Inquiry into Trawler Safety*, para.188-197, pp.76-81.
75. *Fishing News* 11th July, 1969. It has to be remembered that fishing vessel crews work a seven-day week.
76. *ibid.*
77. *Fishing News*, 1st August, 1969.
78. *ibid.*
79. *Fishing News*, 8th August, 1969.
80. *Fishing News*, 15th August, 1969.
81. *Fishing News*, 29th August, 1969.
82. *T & GWU Record*, October 1969. The author is indebted to Mr. Albert Shepherd, Fishing Liaison Officer, T & GWU, Aberdeen, for the assistance and information he gave concerning both this dispute and the Aberdeen fishing industry in general.
83. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Council and F & GP Comm.*, Vol.XLVii, 1969, Min.687., p.177.
84. *Hull Daily Mail*, 14th February, 1970.
85. *Hull Daily Mail*, 16th February, 1970.
86. *Hull Daily Mail*, 18th February, 1970.
87. *Hull Daily Mail*, 23rd February, 1970.

88. *Hull Daily Mail*, 24th February, 1970.
89. *Hull Daily Mail*, 25th February, 1970.
90. *Hull Daily Mail*, 15th April, 1970.
91. These interviews took place in the Aberdeen District Office of the T & GWU, at meetings of 7/146 (Aberdeen Fishermen's Branch) on the fish-market at Aberdeen, at sea, at the Regional Headquarters of the union, Bevin House, Hull, on the fish dock at Hull, and in Grimsby
92. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and F & GP Comm.*, Vol.XLVIII, 1970, Min.223, p.44.
93. *Minutes of a meeting held on 13th June, 1970.* 7/146 Branch Minutes Book for 1970, T & GWU, Aberdeen.
94. *Fisheries Dispute between The United Kingdom and Iceland*, 14th July to 19th May 1973, Cmnd.5341, HMSO, London, 1973, p.1.
95. *ibid.* p.iii.
96. *ibid.* p.2. Before the extension of national fishing limits, the supervision of the exploitation of fish stocks in the North East Atlantic had been the responsibility of the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC). The membership of NEAFC was made up of virtually all the countries with fishing interests in the area. Scientific research and advice were obtained from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) which is a major institution, for the examination of the problems of fisheries management and conservation. The ICES is situated in Copenhagen.
97. *op.cit.* p.5.
98. *ibid.* p.5.
99. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and F & GP Comm.*, Vol.L1, 1973, Mins.640 and 641.
100. *ibid.* p.234.

101. J. Nicolson, *op.cit.* pp.172-173.
102. 'The Fishery Limits off Iceland 200 Nautical Miles', Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Reykjavik, October, 1975.
103. NATO has what is considered to be an important air and sea surveillance unit stationed at Keflavik, which is to the north of Reykjavik, and manned exclusively by American armed forces personnel.
104. *Exchange of Notes between the United Kingdom and Iceland concerning Fishing in the Icelandic Fisheries Zone*, Oslo, 1st June, 1976, Cmnd.6545, HMSO, London, 1976, p.2. The list of vessels comprised side-trawlers and a small number of stern trawlers drawn from the ports of Aberdeen, Fleetwood, Grimsby, Hull and North Shields, with the majority operating out of the two Humber ports.
105. *ibid.* p.11.
106. J. Nicolson, *op.cit.* p.172.
107. Mrs. P.W. Birnie, The History of the EEC Common Fisheries Policy, Appendix 1, Minutes of Evidence, Fifth Report from the Expenditure Committee, House of Commons, 'The Fishing Industry', HMSO, London, 1978, p.94.
108. *ibid.* p.106.
109. *ibid.* p.102.
110. Cairns and his colleagues were concerned exclusively with the wage-earning fishermen employed by the trawler companies. Little interest was shown by the union to recruit share-fishermen employed in the near-water sector.
111. When Cairns resigned from his employment with the T & GWU in 1980, the members of 7/146 Branch presented him with a framed chart of the North Atlantic and Middle Water fishing grounds, a plaque inscribed with their appreciation for his work on their behalf and a cheque for one hundred pounds. (The author attended a social function in Aberdeen, Hogmanay 1980, at which the presentation was made to the former National Fishing Liaison Officer).

112. *T & GWU Policy Statement on the Decasualisation of the Fishing Industry*, T & GWU, Bevin House, Hull, November, 1975, pp.12-13. The italicised passages of the quotation were underlined in the document.
113. *ibid.* p.14
114. *ibid.* p.15.
115. *National Fishing Policy Document Vo.2, An Employment Scheme for Wage-Earning Fishermen*, T & GWU, Bevin House, Hull, 1976.
116. *ibid.* p.2.
117. *ibid.* pp.3-4.
118. Kitchen is of the opinion that since the election of J. Prescott, MP, parliamentary debates on maritime legislation "have changed their tone". He also thinks that it is somewhat ironic that the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, became law when the then leader of the seamen's union was an MP and that the union made little or no attempt to get a member of the union elected to Parliament in order that the maritime labour laws could be subjected to change. See J.S. Kitchen, *op.cit.* p.318.
119. C. Crouch, *op.cit.* p.93.
120. K. Middlemas, *op.cit.* p.446.
121. Letter from D.K. Cairns to 'All Fishing Officers', 29th June, 1976. With permission to quote from D.K. Cairns and one of the recipients of the letter, J.M. Keenan, T & GWU, Aberdeen.
122. At a conference of the Fishermen's Section of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITWF) Ltd., held in Grimsby in 1976, which was attended by delegates from Canada, Denmark, Faeroe Islands, Finland, German Federal Republic, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, UK, and USA, Cairns presented a paper based on the two policy documents, in which he discussed the need to bring maritime industrial relations more closely in line with land-based industrial relations. An American delegate, representing the Seafarers' International Union of North America, complimented the T & GWU on its decasualisation policy, which, he

observed, was far in advance of any maritime trade union policy he knew of ("T & GWU has set a lead for other nations") and urged the ITWF to accept the T & GWU's policy as its own. (*Minutes of the International Transport Workers' Federation, Fishermen's Section Conference, Grimsby, 21-22 June, 1976. Doc.76/F.1/3-2*).

This was subsequently achieved at a meeting of the Fishermen's Section Social Policy Committee at Torshavn, Faroe Islands, in 1978:

"The delegates devoted some considerable attention to a paper submitted by the British Transport and General Workers' Union on an employment scheme for fishermen. Following a number of amendments to the paper designed to make it acceptable to as many fishermen's affiliates as possible the principle of the establishment of national labour boards for fishing was accepted unanimously as were a number of functions to be carried out by such boards".

Agenda Item 2, *Security of Employment, ITWF Fishermen's Section Social Policy Committee, Torshavn, October, 1978, Dec.78/F/1-Report.*

123. *Minutes of a Special General Meeting held on 20th November, 1975, GSDFVE & FU, Minutes Book for 1978, Grimsby.*
At that time the membership of the T & GWU was 1,904,884.
124. *Minutes of the First Meeting of the Grimsby Engineers' Branch, T & GWU, Grimsby, 28th Jan. 1976, Minutes Book for 1976, Grimsby.*
125. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and F & GP Comm., Vol.LIV, 1976, p.190.*
126. *ibid. p.237.*
127. *op.cit. para.144, p.55.*
128. *ibid.*
129. *ibid. para.145, p.55.*
130. *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) Vol.944, 16th February, 1978. HMSO, London, 1978.*

131. In 1975, inshore- fishermen's organisations had organised a blockade of several major British ports in protest at their economic problems, EEC rules governing quotas and conservation, and the growth in imports of fish to the UK. See G. Cargill, 'Economic Blockade: The Story of the Fishermen's Blockade of the Ports', Mollendiner Press, Glasgow, 1976.
132. *Proposals for a Decasualisation Scheme*, British Fishing Federation, Hull, 1977.
133. *ibid.* p.2.
134. *op.cit.* para.191, pp.77-78.
135. *ibid.* para.192, p.78.
136. *ibid.* para.192, p.78.
137. *Fishing News*, 29th December, 1981.
138. *Minutes of a meeting of 7/146 Aberdeen Deck and Engineers' Branch held on 17th June 1978*, Minutes Book for 1978, T & GWU, Aberdeen.
139. D.K. Cairns, personal communication to the author.
140. *Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 10/3c Grimsby Engineers' Branch, held on 20th December, 1976*, Minutes Book for 1976, T & GWU, Grimsby.
141. *Memorandum to members of 7/146 Branch from J.M. Keenan, District Officer, 1978.*
142. *Minutes of a Joint Meeting between the AFVOA Industrial Relations (Fishing Vessels) Committee and the Transport & General Workers' Union (Fishermen's Section), 1st August, 1978, Albert Quay, Aberdeen, pp.1-2.*
143. *ibid.* p.2
144. *Minutes of Meeting between the AFVOA and 7/146 Branch of the T & GWU, 28th August, 1978.*
Cairns asked Keenan to convey his congratulations to the members of 7/146 Branch. He was "delighted with the progress they had made on decasualisation in Aberdeen" (*Minutes of a meeting of 7/146 Aberdeen Deck and Engineers Section, T & GWU, 30th September, 1978*)

145. *Report of the Working Group on Discipline in the Fishing Industry*, Department of Trade, HMSO, London, 1975. The Committee, under the chairmanship of M.J. Service, Assistant Secretary in the Marine Division of the Department, consisted of five BFF representatives, three representatives of trawler officer guilds, and three trade union officials (two of whom were T & GWU officials), one official from MAFFS, and one from DAFS. The Committee's terms of reference were:

"To review the disciplinary requirements on board fishing vessels with particular reference to the framework of authority required in modern conditions and the interest of safety, good shipboard relations and effective operation, and to make recommendations."

ibid. Appendix 1, p.22.
146. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and F & GP Comm.*, T & GWU,, Vol.LV, 1977 p.247.
147. *Minutes of a meeting of 7/146 Deck and Engineers' Branch, T & GWU*, 13th December, 1976, Minutes Book for 1976, T & GWU, Aberdeen.
148. *Sec.25(1) Merchant Shipping Act, 1979.* Merchant seamen were excluded from this section of the Act.
149. This meeting took place in 1978.
150. *Min. & Rec. of Gen. Exec. Counc. and F & GP Comm.*, T & GWU, Vol.LVI, 1978, Min.163, p.37.
151. It should be pointed out that an Aberdeen chief engineer, on application to an industrial tribunal in November, 1977, did in fact receive a redundancy payment amounting to £1,760. This, however, is an extremely rare case of a man being employed by one trawler company for a period of 16 years. Incidentally, the solicitor for the company claimed that "as the applicant had been in the habit of going on holiday in 1974, 1975 and 1976, he was in effect terminating his contract every time he did so". *Industrial Tribunals (Scotland)*, Case No. S/3720/77, Aberdeen, 14 November, 1977.
152. *The Labour Party Manifesto 1979*, The Labour Party, Transport House,, 1979, p.13.

153. Letter from J.M. Keenan to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, dated 19th June 1980.
155. Delegates' Reports, *Minutes of the Eleventh T & GWU Fishing Conference*, Fleetwood, June 6th, 1980, T & GWU, Aberdeen, 1980.
156. *ibid.*, *Annual Fishing Report for the Port of Grimsby*, 1980.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUDING REMARKS

C H A P T E R 10

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this study the author has sought to document, both theoretically and empirically, the continuing and prevailing employment practices, relationships and industrial relations in a sector of the British fishing industry, which emerged, flourished and declined in a span of some eighty years. Throughout this time the major defining characteristic of casualism of the employment relationship between trawler companies and the crews of their vessels remained largely unchanged, except for a period of less than eighteen months, when the state, using wartime emergency legislation, imposed a more formal system upon the employers and employees.

Changes have, of course, taken place since the formation of the steam trawler companies and the emergence of trade unionism amongst their employees. For example, there are substantial technological differences between an early steam trawler and a recently-constructed stern trawler. There have also been changes in the employment relationship between employers and trawlermen, in maritime labour legislation, in domestic and international fisheries management and in the social, cultural and economic history of those involved in the industry. However, the patterns of dominance of power and compliance, have endured and despite the challenge of the trade unions, remained durable. Gaventa made a similar observation in his study of the mining communities in the Appalachian Valley:

"Time ... has brought changes in the Valley - of technology, of culture, of social life - but, in the flux, the basic patterns of inequality and the supporting patterns of power and powerlessness have persisted, if not grown stronger."¹

At one level, the author's study has exposed a deep division between himself and Tunstall, on the one hand, and on the other hand, those observers and writers who place so much emphasis on the consensus, allegedly prevailing amongst employers and employees, on such issues as employment practices and the managerial prerogative of the skippers.² In spite of all those who remarked upon the harmonious relationships within the trawler companies, the evidence elicited by an historical examination of the industry demonstrates that there existed a substantial degree of disaffection amongst the trawler crews. This disaffection, or discontent, revealed itself in various ways, including disobedience, usually involving several men on board a single vessel and in industrial disputes which tied up scores, if not hundreds, of vessels. That these individual and collective acts of defiance seldom achieved any practical results reflected the prevailing sets of dominance and inequality in the industry. Maritime labour legislation was a major determinant of the patterns of power and their durability.³ Whilst the study reveals the bias contained in a number of histories and accounts of this sector of the industry, its theoretical and empirical enquiry also demonstrated that a purely empirical perspective would have been equally one-sided in the attempt to gain a deeper

understanding of the complex nature of maritime employment practices and relationships.⁴

The assumption at the beginning of the research programme was that an historical perspective would produce useful insights into prevailing social relationships in the fishing industry; this expectation was realised in that, for example, the historical dimension brought into sharp focus the importance of maritime labour legislation in the shaping of the power relationship between employers and fishermen.⁵

It is readily admitted by the author that he was initially far from fully aware of the important part played by labour legislation in the formation and development of labour practices in the trawler company sector. This study has illustrated that throughout the history of the trawler companies, labour law was a major determining factor in operating practices, particularly at sea. This can be seen, for example, in the employment conditions of the fishing apprentices in Hull and Grimsby in the late nineteenth century and in the power exercised by a trawler skipper over his crew at the present time. In the context of the merchant navy, Kitchen readily acknowledged the power given by the state to the employers and the captains of cargo ships and other vessels in the form of the Merchant Shipping Acts.⁶ Where the fishing industry is concerned,

this study has demonstrated the historical acceptance of the close relationship of maritime labour law and labour practices. Only in recent years was this important dimension and mechanism subjected to sustained criticism and challenge by the organised labour movement in the shape of the T & GWU and its sponsored MPs. It is the author's claim that this historical element, as outlined in Chapter 2, in its empirical application, has uncovered at least some aspects of the complex nature of the power relationships that exist between employers and employees in the United Kingdom economy.

The social dimension also illustrated the distinction between appearance and reality in the perception of the material environment within which fishermen perform their work. Until he read Tunstall's book and commenced his own investigation, the author had accepted, somewhat uncritically, the widely-held notion that it is in the nature of the activity that fishing is a dangerous occupation. No-one would challenge the assertion that the sea is an alien and formidable environment in which to work but the study has substantiated the hypothesis, outlined in Chapter 2, that the effects of the material environment are mediated by the social dimension.⁷ The empirical evidence of Tunstall's investigation and the author's study confirm the significance of the social dimension, as it is manifested through the social product of the interactions of groups of people with

each other and significant others and with their material environment. The circumstances within which accidents and deaths become more or less likely is, to a considerable extent, a social product.

The third element of the study was the application of a concept of power formulated by Lukes. This three-dimensional view of power enabled the author to test hypotheses concerning a) the conservatism of employment practices in this sector of the industry, b) the apparent inertia of political administrators and state officials, and c) the role of trade union officials in monitoring the continuity of industrial relations processes or challenging the extant power relationships. Whilst these are not precise and specific hypotheses, they encouraged the charting of a research course, within which it became possible to examine the power relations in the fishing industry in terms of their historical and societal framework, social dimensions, durability and susceptibility to challenge. This examination within the framework formulated by Lukes generated a deeper understanding of the historical and contemporary circumstances surrounding the relationships between the trawler companies and their employees.

In terms of the conservatism of the employment practices, typified by the enduring casualism of the employment of fishermen, the analytical framework of the study illuminated the powerlessness of the small, port-based trade unions to

challenge in an effective way the managerial prerogative of the employers. When challenges were mounted by some trade unionists, they were supported in a spasmodic and transitory way by their peers. Thus, with the exception of Aberdeen in recent years, there is in the fishing industry a history of impotence experienced by both organised and unorganised labour. Sanctions could be used against those who sought to bring about changes in labour practices, for example, skippers and mates were in a vulnerable position in that they were placed in a competitive relationship with each other. Sanctions could also be employed against chief engineers and even those of little or no rank. These sanctions could be strengthened by what Gaventa has called an "historically shaped mobilization of bias"⁸ in the information that is communicated to the participants in an industrial dispute and to interested others.

It is the three-dimensional concept of power which brought to light the inter-related dimensions of power in the employment relationship. There is, of course, a clearly defined link between maritime labour law and maritime labour practices, which worked to the advantage of the employers and to the disadvantage of the fishermen but this study, because of its theoretical and methodological perspective, has isolated the legal underpinnings of the power exercised

by the employers. Thus whilst industrial disputes and conflict are to be found within the first dimension of power, i.e. visible expressions of discontent and disagreement, the mechanism of law links the second dimension of power to the third-dimensional power relationship. For the fishermen, the power of their employers is linked inextricably with the power of the state so that the managerial prerogative is endowed with a legitimacy which appears to be immune from challenge and which compels fishermen to work at sea in extremely hazardous conditions. Thus, those who challenged labour practices were seen to be repudiating not only the power of the employers but the force of law itself.

These processes of the third dimension of power tend to elicit from those without power a response of acquiescence through acknowledgement of powerlessness and a concomitant reluctance to engage in trade union activities and organisation. Those advocating changes designed to improve the prospects of the less powerful may encounter amongst those they are trying to help a lack of purpose and commitment. This response is interpreted by some as apathy and indifference and by others as a consensus of values, beliefs and attitudes; so far as the fishermen in the catching sector of the British fishing industry are concerned, the author's historical review does not support such naive conclusions.

It has become evident that the state plays a crucial role which is far from neutral because of the inertia of political administrators and state officials.⁹ One example of this is the place of law in the scheme of things. The present study has demonstrated that the sustained criticism of, and challenge to, extant maritime law mounted by the T & GWU and its sponsored MPs owed much to the loss of fifty-nine fishermen on board the three Hull trawlers which sank in 1968. Before that tragic event, there was little concerted opposition to maritime law. Numerous grievances had been aired and when the demands of the complainants were ignored industrial stoppages occurred but grievances, which ranged in time and issue from winter fleeting to port registration schemes, rarely sought to challenge in any fundamental way the state and the law. This appears to represent a pervasive acceptance of the notion that the operations of trawlers constitute a distinctive working environment which necessarily entails separate labour legislation. It is only in recent times that the power relationship assumed the nature of an extant and conscious issue of considerable importance.

Historically there were challenges to the prevailing patterns of dominance which led to changes in the structure of the power field. The most prominent example was the imposition of the EWO for the industry. Other occasions included the acquisition of formal negotiating rights, trade

union membership agreements, notably in Aberdeen, port registration schemes and the amendments to the Merchant Shipping Act, 1970. In almost all cases, however, the protests and attendant activities were of limited duration and reflected only part of the disaffection of the labour force. Apart from the demands made by the Aberdeen fishermen's branch, until the mid nineteen-seventies there was rarely a clearly formed articulation of a radically different conception of the employment relationship.

Gaventa, on the basis of the findings of his study of American mining communities, observed:

"In the first instance, a process of issue and action formulation must occur, to overcome the effects of the third-dimension of power. The powerless must be able to explore their grievances openly, with others similarly situated. They must develop their own notions of interests and actions and themselves as actors. This process of 'conscientization' was seen to have occurred in the Valley, as the community organization and the community media rapidly brought otherwise more latent grievances to the fore."¹⁰

Similar developments took place in the British fishing industry at the end of the nineteen-sixties and in the nineteen seventies. In the first place, the T & GWU sought specific changes in maritime labour law and maritime labour practices, and modifications to the terms and conditions of employment of its fishermen-members. Officials accepted the criticisms, made by members, concerning the union's historically quiescent role and sought actively to articulate

the grievances felt by their members and to formulate plans by which action could be taken to modify the industry's power relationship. A definitive demonstration of this change in union policy and procedures was the alacrity with which the Aberdeen dispute in 1969 was declared an official stoppage by the union hierarchy.

With the active involvement of the Aberdeen branch, the union's fishing industry officials, under the leadership of D.K. Cairns, moved from a bargaining position, concerned with limited objectives, to one which sought the implementation of an alternative system of employment. A multi-faceted strategy was employed by the officials and branch members, which incorporated the mobilisation of opinion and support amongst the union membership, e.g. the ballot at Aberdeen, the enlistment of assistance from Labour MPs and the publication of policy documents which, *inter alia*, sought both to elicit the sympathetic consideration of as wide an audience as possible and to counter the prevailing mobilisation of bias. It is in the union's campaign for decasualisation and changes in maritime law that we see the shift from the third dimension of power to the pluralist, or first, dimension of overt conflict between clearly identifiable groups over readily perceived resources.

In this way the three dimensional concept of power is, as Lukes claimed, empirically applicable since it enables the examiner to go beyond the surface appearance and isolate

those mechanisms and processes of power which maintain quiescence and dispel nascent conflict. In addition, this theoretical perspective, employed in the arena of industrial relations, demands a wider investigation than that of institutionalised collective bargaining processes within the particular industry under scrutiny. For example, this study illustrated, at one level, the crucial position occupied by a small number of trade union officials, all of whom had had little or no experience of the fishing industry when taking up their posts. This lack of experience meant that they had not imbibed the predominant values, beliefs, myths and attitudes of trawler crews and ancillary workers. These officials came from other industries, e.g. docks, petro-chemical industry, brewing, engineering and state-service industries, which were substantially different from the fishing industry, in terms of labour law, labour practices, trade union representation and industrial co-operation and conflict. It was D.K. Cairns, a man with no previous knowledge of the fishing industry, who co-ordinated the union's policy and strategy on decasualisation. Here then is a clear refutation of the stereotype of trade union official who is only superficially interested in and acquainted with circumstances of his members at the operational level.¹¹

By the very act of initiating a campaign of challenge, Cairns, his colleagues and branch members in Aberdeen and Grimsby, brought a new aspect to the power relationship

existing in the industry. For example, the challenge represented a rejection of the perception of the close inter-relationship of employers, state officials and trade union officials. (The author was informed, on a number of occasions, by engineers and deckhands, that the "union officers were in the pockets of the gaffers"). This was one consequence of the union's purposeful attempt to eliminate casualism. Where the employers were concerned the carefully orchestrated campaign conducted by the T & GWU demanded a response which would not earn the displeasure of the Labour Government or state officials, since their assistance was needed, in a number of ways, to counter the effects of economic decline. Concessions had to be made particularly in Aberdeen where the labour force had shown, by way of the ballot on decasualisation and port disputes, that its members were willing to take industrial action in order to move towards attainment of the union's objectives.

At another level of analysis, the perspective adopted focussed upon the relationship between capital, the state and labour. The results obtaining from this part of the investigation are somewhat tentative but some conclusions can be drawn. For example, the author believes that the view put forward by Middlemas, in his book "Politics in Industrial Society", that organised labour has joined organised capital and the state to become a "joint governing institution" in advanced capitalist society, contains a

major weakness in an otherwise perceptive analysis of politics in twentieth century Britain. Middlemas is of the opinion, based on a study which is largely contemporaneous with the author's work, that political administrations in Britain have sought to manage conflict by the continuing development of a triangular and co-operative relationship between the state, capital and labour.¹² He contends that this is not corporatism *per se* but the manipulation of corporate bias since, *inter alia*, the leaders of the trade union movement are somewhat circumscribed by the union laity, in entering into contracts with the other two parties.¹³ Middlemas observes:

"The modern state is composed not only of government and the state apparatus but includes the governing institutions; the degree of their inclusion serves as a means of distinguishing them from other institutions and interest groups merely contiguous to the state. The functions of governments in seeking crisis avoidance and the preservation of political harmony between class and interest groups can indeed only be achieved by that incorporation, since governing institutions both respond to and control their membership."¹⁴

For Middlemas, corporate bias enables the trade unions to overcome those barriers to strategic decision-making processes. The weakness in his theory, however, is that capital and organised labour do not obtain equal benefits from corporate bias. The reality of the triangular relationship, or corporate pluralism, is that by its very nature labour has to subordinate its interests to some

extent to those of the state and capital. Whilst it may be the case that it is in labour's interests to have an arrangement with the state and capital rather than have no arrangement at all, the subordination of labour's interests generates discontent amongst the members of the labour movement. Middlemas' thesis then is a somewhat misleading and simplified explanation of certain social processes in advanced industrial economies. These processes seek to reduce industrial conflict and encourage economic growth and productivity.

The corporate pluralist perspective, to which Middlemas has made a significant contribution, is based upon the assumption that consensual values and common interests outweigh conflicting political and material interests.¹⁵ It is a pluralist view of power relationships since the argument is made that once social groups reach compromises, it becomes possible for the state to develop sets of rules and procedures which encourage the development of such decisions so that conflicting or competing groups are able to perceive that more can be obtained through co-operative decision-making than by way of social conflict.¹⁶ The problem for this thesis is that it fails to provide an explanation for the persistence of industrial conflict in those nations which have institutionalised processes of conflict resolution. These processes of conflict resolution encourage the reaching of compromises which both reflect and perpetuate the existent power field.

There are similar inconsistencies and contradictions in Middlemas' explanation of recent development in the triangular relationship in the UK. There are institutionalised mechanisms of bargaining between capital and labour but the state is not a neutral force or mediator. A political administration, be it Conservative or Labour, has a responsibility for the whole of the economic, social and political order of the nation; in other words, it has to stimulate business activities and encourage investment of private capital into profitable concerns. For organised labour, this means that certain economic, social and political goals become unattainable since they can only be obtained at the expense of the interests of capital and the state. There are occasions, of course, when the state may act in a way that is of harm to the interests of capital.

Middlemas further weakens his argument by his subscription to received opinion of the inordinate power of the trade union movement. He offers the statement:

"....the political potential of the trade union movement... has transcended the relationships of the system characterised by corporate bias. Whatever may be true in the sphere of wage bargaining and specifically industrial activity, it overshadows the potential of employers, owners and management to influence the organisation of the state. trade union hegemony has broadened out further than in any comparable Western nation, profoundly to alter the nature of the state." 17

The evidence obtained from the present study concerning the state, capital and labour, even although of a somewhat

tentative kind, contradicts this pluralist view of the power wielded by trade unions. In 1946 and 1976 - 1979 the T & GWU was unable to persuade a Labour administration and its state officials to implement decasualisation of employment for fishermen. However, within the "sphere of wage bargaining and specifically industrial activity", Labour governments, in 1947 and 1967, sanctioned a reduction of, and then an end to casualism in the docks industry. The point, drawn from the author's study, is that there are different power relationships existing in different industries and these, *inter alia*, reflect upon both the differences in the history of social responses to change and the unevenness of the distribution of power within the trade union movement to influence events and circumstances.

This criticism represents a challenge to Middlemas' pluralistic analysis rather than a refutation of it, since the author is not in a position to offer an alternative theory of the relationship between the state, capital and labour. The specific case study of the attempts made by the T & GWU to end casualism in the fishing industry throws doubts upon the concept of labour as a "joint governing institution" along with capital.¹⁸ The relationship between the three institutions is, at the very least, complex and dynamic; where the fishing industry is concerned the concept of the triangular relationship is an oversimplification since, as reviewed in this thesis, there are numerous international aspects and pressures to take into consideration.

For example, the state was unable to prevent the loss of traditional North Atlantic fishing grounds which led in turn to the near complete demise of this sector of the industry. In the nineteen-sixties and seventies, international relations and issues were deemed to be of far greater import, by both Conservative and Labour administrations, than the interests of capital and labour in the fishing industry. In consequence both suffered from the changing and worsening circumstances in this period. It was the state which altered the power field and hence restructured the distribution of power amongst the three institutions.

It can be said that this study has demonstrated the applicability of a concept of power and power relationships to an examination of social relationships, within an industry, at a time of fundamental structural change. It may, however, be unwise to extrapolate the findings of this study to the level of generalised theory concerning the conduct of industrial relations in general and in specific industries. Much more research needs to be conducted in the important arena of inter-actions between political administrators, departments of state (and other state agencies) employers' organisations and the trade union movement. This study confirms the need for more research to be carried out in order to construct a rigorously critical historical analysis of trade union attitudes and behaviour

towards employers, the economy, the law and the state. Such research requires far greater resources than those available to most individual academic researchers.

Possible Developments in the Fishing Industry

One observation that can be made with some confidence is that the pessimistic forebodings of Joseph Duncan, voiced in 1909, concerning the dominance of the trawler companies and, as he saw it, the concomitant and inevitable decline of the inshore sector, do not match the reality of present-day circumstances. In the nineteen-seventies it was the trawler companies which experienced a major decline in their economic circumstances whilst the inshore fleet, or much of it, encountered a considerable growth in prosperity. In Scotland, Aberdeen has lost its position of primacy to Peterhead, whereas in England Fleetwood, Grimsby, Hull and North Shields have all declined as fishing ports. We can say of the UK as a whole that it has, over the past twenty years, largely undergone a transformation as a fishing nation, to the extent that it now bears the hallmarks of a coastal fishing nation, rather than one that is largely dependent upon fish caught in distant waters. Duncan, who was one of the earliest trade union officials in the Scottish fishing industry, died in 1964 and hence did not witness the restructuring of the catching sector of the industry.

The following remarks will be confined to observations concerning the catching sector of the industry in Scotland,¹⁹ based on the assumption that the UK will retain membership of the EEC for at least several more years.²⁰ Whilst the fishing industry has only a miniscule role to play in the UK's gross domestic product, it is of major importance to a number of regions of Scotland (See Map 4, "Full-time Fishermen Employed in Scottish Fisheries Districts, p.503). For example, in the Shetland Islands, the industry has for generations been an important employer of labour and no doubt will continue to be so after the contraction of the oil industry there. Elsewhere in the islands and on the mainland, there are numerous small communities with few employment opportunities outwith the industry. In the Grampian Region some eight per cent (approximately 15,000 people) of the workforce is dependent upon the industry for its livelihood. Table 31, Weight and Landings in 1978 by Scottish and Other UK Vessels, p.545, gives the weight and value of landings of fish including shellfish. It can be seen that landings by Scottish vessels, the overwhelming majority of which are near-water vessels, owned outwith the trawler company sector, in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK accounted for as much as 60 per cent of the weight and 53 per cent of the total value of UK landings by all UK vessels. The industry then has, at regional and local levels, an important economic, cultural and social importance that demands special consideration by national and trans-national policy-makers, e.g. the EEC.

TABLE 31

WEIGHT AND VALUE OF LANDINGS IN 1978 BY
SCOTTISH AND OTHER UK VESSELS

	'000 Tonnes	%	£m	%
Landings of UK vessels in UK	956.5	100	254.7	100
Landings of UK vessels in Scotland	426.2	45	122.2	48
Landings of UK vessels in Northern Ireland	11.5	1	4.8	2
Landings of UK vessels in England and Wales	518.8	54	127.7	50
Landings of Scottish vessels in England and Wales	150.9	16	13.6	5
Landings of Scottish vessels in Scotland	*420.6	44	*121.1	48
Landings of Scottish vessels in UK	571.5	60	134.7	53

*Estimated figure

Source: Godfrey and Godman, "The Scottish Fishing Industry : Technical Opportunities and Political Constraints" in "Scottish Government Yearbook 1980", p. 185.

If the Scottish fishing industry is to remain viable, certain objectives have to be realised; these include:

a) the effective management and rigorously enforced exploitation of the fish stocks off Scotland and elsewhere in joint-EEC waters, b) secure, flourishing markets for the catchers' products and c) the creation of a more systematic and co-ordinated processing, distributing and marketing structure (see Figure 1, Diagram of the Processing and Distribution Network of the Fishing Industry, p.43).

The second and third objectives lie outside the scope of this discussion although note should be taken of the acknowledgement made by the state of the essential need to develop intelligent advertising and promotional programmes for fish.

In the UK, the marketing of fish has been paid scant regard by both the catching and processing sectors of the industry. Until quite recently, for example, little or no attention was given to the importance of changing consumer preferences, stimulating consumer demand or enhancing the presentation of the product. An editorial in the *Fishing News* (22nd August, 1980) asserted that the major cause of the numerous closures of retail fishmonger businesses was the failure of the proprietors to prepare their products in an attractive market. In addition, the editorial claimed that too many firms in the industry had taken their customers for granted and had paid the price for such thoughtlessness.

A recent market-research study, commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, made the following observation:

"At the moment the only sustained marketing of fish is provided by frozen food companies. And they ... are really marketing a product that happens to be fish, rather than selling either the values of fish or the varieties of its species. It is a sobering thought that a half of all fish advertising in the last decade has been for one product, Bird's Eye Fish Fingers which is as much a convenience product as a fish product."²²

In response to the criticisms contained in this report and related criticisms, MAFF has established the Sea Fish Industry Authority which has replaced the White Fish Authority and the Herring Industry Board. This new organisation has been given a pronounced marketing and promotional orientation.

Technological innovation in the fishing industry requires corresponding social and political innovation. The utilisation of advanced fishing-gear technology presents major problems for the continuing viability of the fish stocks. Hence there is a need to restrict the application of sophisticated fishing-gear technology in order to protect the resource upon which it has been employed in a largely unrestrained way.²³ An effort limitation scheme administered by the state and the EEC by way of a system of licensed vessels is one means by which technology and the protection of the fish stocks may be managed in a more effective way.²⁴ A restrictive licensing system would limit the number of vessels exploiting the stocks and so bring closer the attainment of the economic and regional objectives mentioned above.

One consequence of such a system would be that the trawler companies would not be allowed to invest in large fleets of technologically advanced fishing vessels. It will be recalled that the steam trawlers were introduced at a time of unrestricted *laissez-faire* in terms of both the unrestrained access to fishing grounds (there was, of course, a small number of grounds closed to these technologically-superior vessels) and the widespread utilisation of a new form of technology. Some trawler companies have acknowledged what appear to be irreversible changes in the national and trans-national systems of fisheries and have invested in onshore ancillary activities. For example, one, once-large, trawler company with a one-time fleet of twenty-four large side and stern trawlers operating out of Fleetwood and Hull, now has four small stern trawlers and is active now in the processing and distribution areas. Another Hull trawler company which ten years ago operated twelve large side and stern trawlers now owns and operates a single seiner with a crew of twelve.

It is also extremely unlikely that the T & GWU will, in the future, represent as many fishermen as it did ten years ago. Attempts have been made over the years by officials and fishermen's branches of the union to recruit members from amongst the crews of the inshore vessels but these have proved to be utterly fruitless. At the turn of the century, Joseph Duncan of the ASFVE & FU (later the

Scottish Sea Fishers' Union) contended that these crews were antipathetic to trade unionism and in the nineteen-seventies T & GWU officials made the same kind of admission to the author.²⁵

Where ownership of fishing vessels is concerned it is likely that producer co-operatives will be encouraged by both the EEC and the UK state. In Scotland there are a number of co-operatives of fishing-vessel owners which have their own regional and national federations. These co-operatives along with other federations and associations of fishing vessel owners (in this non-trawler company sector) e.g. the Scottish Fishermen's Federation and the Scottish Fishermen's Organisation have become prominent political pressure groups in recent years. In this activity, SFF and SFO representatives and their English counterparts from the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations, have replaced those of the British Fishing Federation as the major spokesmen for the catching sector of the industry in both London and Brussels. (In this context, it should be noted that the HFVOA went into liquidation in 1980.)

A restrictive licensing system could be developed in conjunction with a series of fishing plans for the different regions of the EEC. Among the proposed objectives of an EEC set of fishing plans, drawn up by the Commission (Com (78) 39 Final, January 1978) are:

1. To promote rational exploitation of the biological resources bearing in mind the social and economic needs of certain categories of fishermen in specific regions of the Community.
2. To assure, in regard to these regions, the enjoyment of the natural geographic advantage in catch possibilities within a few hours steaming time from home ports so as to favour balanced development in line with the progressive improvement of fish stocks.²⁶

Regional fishing plans have already been published by the Shetland Islands Council and the Orkney Islands Council. In both of these documents it is claimed that regionally based communities of fishermen and ancillary workers would benefit from the implementation of fishing plans for the maritime areas in which they operate. It is the author's view that these plans would have to be extended to all UK waters in order to meet the needs of those fishermen who exploit the stocks of migratory fish, e.g. mackerel, which has become of major importance to the Scottish fleet. This is another area where more research is needed to establish priority of access and related issues.²⁷

Fishing plans could be based on the criteria which reflected the regional importance of the industry, namely regional preference, in terms of guaranteed percentages of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC), based upon proximity to the fishing grounds. Local preference could be the corner-stone of a fisheries-management policy. Priority of access could be determined in various ways. First of all, first place could be given to local vessels in order to increase the economic advantages to the communities of peripheral maritime regions. Local preference would restrict the activities in the near and middle-water fisheries of those trawler-fleet owners whose major operations had previously been in the distant-water grounds; secondly, preferential treatment could be given to other areas with few employment options outwith the fishing industry; thirdly, there could be enactment of temporary facilities for those vessels from maritime areas experiencing a shortage of fish; fourthly, flexible arrangements could be developed to allow for the mobility between designated areas for fishing migratory species; and finally there could be a lowering of priority on the basis of historic fishing activities in an area and also on the basis of exclusion of vessels from waters outwith those of the EEC.²⁸

The implementation of the fishing plans could be based largely on the management technique of effort limitation.²⁹ This would involve the restrictive licensing scheme, already

mentioned, which would necessarily have to be determined by an appropriate definition of fishing effort and fishing power, phased increases in net mesh sizes (to allow immature fish to escape and breed) and seasonal and area controls to protect spawning fish or those of an inferior quality. Catch quotas would also be an integral element of the management programme and there would have to be a severe reduction of industrial fishing (fish caught for animal food, fertilisers etc.) where this activity was deemed to be harmful to those stocks harvested for human consumption.

Without effective fisheries management, policies and procedures, the prospects for the Scottish fishing industry (and indeed the whole of the UK fishing industry) look bleak. In the last analysis, the decisions concerning a revised Common Fisheries Policy will be taken by senior cabinet ministers, state officials, the ministers and officials of other EEC nations and the officials of the EEC. One is here reminded of the observation contained in the Fleck Report (1961) that the major political and economic decisions concerning the activities of fishing vessels are made by groups outwith the fishing industry itself.

Final Observations

Complex political, legal, technological, social, educational and moral issues are bound up in the increasing controversy concerning the control over, and the equitable

distribution of, the world's natural resources, including organic and inorganic wealth of the oceans, and many fields of study are involved which merit much more detailed scrutiny by researchers. There are, for example, critical problems requiring attention at international, national, industry, and sectional levels, which go beyond the rather limited objectives of this research thesis which has confined itself mainly to the catching sector of the British fishing industry. However, even within the restricted confines of the present study - namely the British fishing industry - much additional investigation is needed and, it is to be hoped, other researchers will pursue some of the issues which this investigation has highlighted. For instance, in today's developed nations, at least, there is an increasing recognition of important human values; these include for the individual in the work-place, the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the production of goods and services, to have satisfying social relationships, to receive appropriate recognition, and to undergo experiences which induce personal development and growth.

The author's research has revealed polarized attitudes among owners, trawler skippers and crews of fishing vessels and among other related agencies and institutions. The catching sector needs a "people strategy" to deal more effectively and humanely with those employed therein. There seems to be *inter alia* a strong case for greater

sharing, participation and enrichment in day-to-day activities and experience at sea; since present conditions are far removed from those prevailing generally among the majority of the nation's working population in land-based industries. Finally, as we have seen, there has been little evidence at high political level of close interest in, and constructive and effective intervention on behalf of, those employed in the catching sector of the British fishing industry in terms of improving operating practices, labour practices, safety regulations, instituting good quality training for recruits, and generally replacing the casual system of employment and other obsolete procedures with ones based on the best modern co-operative and management practices. The need for such action is urgent and time is of the essence.

1. J. Gaventa, op.cit., p. 252
2. See, for example, A. Villiers, op.cit., pp. 9-27.
3. Kitchen concluded that because of the distinctiveness of the maritime transport industry, maritime labour legislation would remain separate and distinct from other labour legislation; op.cit., pp. 294-324.
4. J.H. Goldthorpe, op.cit., pp. 202-206.
5. Tunstall did not pay a great deal of attention to the significant role of maritime labour legislation except in his discussion of the fishing apprenticeship system in the late nineteenth century.
6. See J.S. Kitchen, op.cit., Chapters 5, 6 and 7.
7. These findings also confirm Tunstall's explanation of the influence of labour practices on the effects of the material environment on the fishermen. See J.S. Tunstall, op.cit., pp. 183-189.
8. J. Gaventa, op.cit., p. 254.
9. ibid. pp. 254-256.
10. ibid. p. 257.
11. J.S. Tunstall, op.cit., pp. 255-258.
12. One is here reminded of C. Wright Mills famous and oft-quoted phrase, "the managers of discontent".

13. K. Middlemas, op.cit., pp. 371-385.
14. ibid., p. 460.
15. See F.G. Castles, op.cit., pp. 118-131, for a sustained critique of the corporate-pluratist view of power.
16. ibid. p. 124.
17. K. Middlemas, op.cit., pp. 451-452.
18. Middlemas, in his text, employs the term "joint governing institutions":
 "....to differentiate between mere pressure groups, however powerful in a single plane, and bodies which have been recognised by government as bargaining partners, granted permanent rights of access and accorded devolved powers by the state."
 ibid. p. 381.
19. This discussion owes a great deal to Godfrey and Godman's paper, op.cit. The author wishes to acknowledge the generous assistance given to him in his research by Dr J. Godfrey, Lecturer in Zoology, Edinburgh University.
20. If the Labour Party were to gain office at the next general election and then implement withdrawal from the EEC, the UK would be in a position to determine which nations would be given access to what are major fishing grounds.
21. J. Godfrey and N.A. Godman, op.cit., p. 192.
22. "The Marketing of Fish", op.cit., p. 17.

23. C. Gersuny and J.J. Poggie, op.cit., pp. 46-47.
24. D.I.A. Steel and N. Buchanan, op.cit., p. 8.
25. Personal communication from Melvin Keenan, District Officer, T & GWU, Aberdeen, 1980.
26. J. Godfrey and N.A. Godman, op.cit., pp. 199-203.
27. "The Fisheries in the Shetland Area : A Study in Conservation and Development", Shetland Islands Council, Lerwick, 1979. "The Fisheries of the Orkney Area : A Study in Conservation and Development", Orkney Fisheries Association, Orkney Islands Council, HIDB., Inverness, 1979.
28. J. Godfrey and N.A. Godman, op.cit., The author has modified some of the proposals first outlined in this joint paper but the principles concerning fishing plans remain the same.
29. There is an EEC fishing plan in operation in Donegal Bay, Eire and a system of regional preference has been established in the management of the herring fishing around the Isle of Man and in the Firth of Clyde. See "The Fisheries of Orkney : A Study in Conservation and Development", pp. 4-6.

Crew's Agreement and Account
of Voyages of Aberdeen Sailing
Trawler Admiral , dated 31st December, 1886.

Eng. 7b.
FISHING

Agreement No. 9712

22 JAN. 87



ISSUED BY
THE BOARD OF TRADE,
Oct., 1883,
In pursuance of
43 & 47 Vict. c. 41.

PARTICULARS OF TRAWLER AND EMPLOYMENT.

Name of Trawler and Port of Registry.	Official No., Port No., and Date of Register.	Registered Tonnage.	Letters and Number.
<i>Admiral Abdon</i>	<i>15 Jan 1883</i>	<i>8.22</i>	<i>Ab. 8</i>

Date of Termination of Voyage.

Dec 31 188

RUNNING AGREEMENT

AND

ACCOUNT OF VOYAGES AND CREW

OF A

Trawler of 25 Tons Net Register or upwards,

ENGAGED IN THE SEA FISHING TRADE;

WITH

A Form of Record and Report of every case of Death, Injury, Illtreatment, or Punishment of any Member of the Crew; and of every Casualty to the Smack or her Boat.

NOTICE.—The attendance before the Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office (of Seamen engaged and discharged under this Agreement) is unnecessary; but every Seaman has a right to appeal to the Superintendent if he has any dispute with the Skipper or Owner as to his wages or share of the profits of the voyage or trip, or share in a fishing or catch, or deductions therefrom, or concerning his engagement, service, discharge, account, and settlement.

On whatever date the Agreement is made it expires on the next following 30th day of June or 31st day of December, as the case may be. If, however, the Trawler is absent from the United Kingdom on the 30th day of June or 31st day of December, then this Agreement remains in force until the first arrival of the Trawler at her final port of destination in the United Kingdom after such date, or the discharge of cargo consequent on such arrival.

This Agreement is to be delivered up to the Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office on the 31st December or 30th June, as the case may be; or if the Crew are at sea and serving under it on those dates, then it must be delivered to the Superintendent within 48 hours after it has terminated by the discharge of and settlement with the Crew; the Superintendent will thereupon issue the Certificate of Deposit (C.C.) Neglect to deposit the returns within the time prescribed by the Merchant Shipping Acts subjects the Owner or Skipper to a penalty.

Agreement No. 9712

2

NATURE OF FISHING ON PRESENT EXPEDITION.		Full complement of Crew. State No. of Hands all told.
Trawling North Sea		Five
REGISTERED (MANAGING) OWNER.		
Name.	Address. (State No. of House, Street, and Town.)	
Arthur Tappin Mortimer	Achardeen	
SKIPPER'S NAME AND No. OF CERTIFICATE (IF ANY).		
Abel Joseph Brown No 294		
ADDRESS. (STATE No. OF HOUSE, STREET, AND TOWN.)		
6 Wake Place Spring Garden Scarborough		

APPRENTICES ON BOARD.

[illegible]

Agreement No. 9712
3

REGULATIONS for MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE.
SANCTIONED BY THE BOARD OF TRADE.

No.	OFFENCE.	Amount of Fine.
1	Not being on board at the time fixed by the agreement	Five Shillings.
2	Not returning on Board at the expiration of leave -	Five Shillings
3	Striking or assaulting any person on board or belonging to the Ship (if not otherwise prosecuted) -	Five Shillings.
4	Bringing or having on board spirituous liquors -	Five Shillings.
5 {	Drunkenness. First Offence - - - -	Five Shillings.
	Ditto. Second, and for each subsequent Offence.	Ten Shillings.
6	Sleeping or gross negligence while on the look-out -	Five Shillings.
7	Destroying or defacing the copy of the agreement which is made accessible to the Crew - -	Five Shillings.
8	Man on watch failing to exhibit Lights at proper time	Five Shillings.
9	If any Officer is guilty of any act or default which is made subject to a Fine, he shall be liable to a Fine of twice the amount which would be exacted for a like act or default from a Seaman, and such fine shall be paid and applied in the same manner as other Fines.	

NOTE 1.—To enforce these Fines it is necessary that the formalities required by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, s. 256, should be carefully complied with.

NOTE 2.—Obliterate by crossing through with ink every one of the above Offences, for which no fine is to be inflicted.

INSTRUCTIONS TO SKIPPERS OF TRAWLERS.

1. The Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats) Act, 1883, requires the Skipper of every Trawler of 25 tons register tonnage and upwards to enter into an agreement with every Seaman whom he carries to sea, or who serves in such trawler as one of the Crew. The agreement must be read over and explained to each Seaman, who will thereupon sign the same in duplicate in the presence of the Skipper, who must attest the signature. This Copy of the Agreement is to be retained by the Skipper; the duplicate copy, printed in red, is to be sent by the Skipper to the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office at the port of departure. The penalty for shipping a Seaman without an Agreement is £5.
2. Every erasure, interlineation, or alteration in any agreement (except additions made for shipping substitutes) is inoperative unless proved to have been made with the consent of all the persons interested therein.
3. Fraudulently altering or making false entry in, or delivering a false copy of any agreement, or being party to such an act, is punishable by a penalty of £20.
4. The Skipper is required on every return of his vessel to a port in the United Kingdom, before the final termination of the agreement, to discharge or engage in the manner herein described any Seaman he discharges or engages at such port; also before he leaves port to endorse on the agreement and sign a statement of the changes made or to be made in his Crew, and to sign and send to the nearest Superintendent a full and accurate statement on a form sanctioned by the Board of Trade of every change which has taken place in his Crew. If the statement is not duly made the Skipper will incur a penalty of £5.
5. The Skipper is, not less than four hours before paying off or discharging any Seaman, unless the Seaman gives notice to the Skipper that he does not require it, to give to him an account in a form sanctioned by the Board of Trade of his wages, and of all deductions to be made therefrom, under a penalty of £5 for non-compliance. When the Seaman is to be paid by a share of the catch, and any dispute arises as to his share, the owner is required, under a penalty of £20, to submit all accounts and books relating to the catch to the Seaman's inspection, on demand made at a reasonable time.
6. Upon paying off or discharging a Seaman, the Skipper is bound, under a penalty of £5, to sign and deliver to him a certificate of discharge; and the Seaman when duly discharged will sign, in the presence of a witness, a release from all claims in respect of the voyage just finished (see page 7, cols. 19 and 20).

Signed

And it is also agreed, That the settlement of all shares of Fishing Profits shall be made within seven days after the Trawler's return to Port at the end of Fishing during the Expedition referred to in this Agreement; three days at least before settlement, a full account of the Fish taken, and of the amount for which it is sold, and of all charges and deductions to be made from such amount, or from such shares or any of them, shall be rendered to each Member of the Crew who is to be remunerated wholly or partly by share :

Agreement No. 9712₅

And it is further agreed, That the deductions to be so made from shares of Fishing Profits shall comprise ⁽³⁾

all customary expenses connected with Trade

And it is also agreed, That ⁽⁴⁾

And it is also agreed, That if any Member of the Crew considers himself to be aggrieved by any breach of the Agreement or otherwise, he shall represent the same to the Skipper or Officer in charge of the Trawler in a quiet and orderly manner, who shall thereupon take such steps as the case may require.

And it is also agreed, That the Skipper shall afford to every Member of the Crew reasonable facilities for appealing to a Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office in the event of his dissatisfaction with his account and settlement.

And it is further agreed, That any Member of the Crew shall be liable to dismissal upon *Twenty four* hours' notice given to him by the said Skipper or Owner and upon being paid the amount, if any, to which he is entitled in respect of his Wages or Share to the date of dismissal; and further, that any Member of the Crew may claim his discharge at the time of any of the settlements above referred to, upon giving a similar previous Notice to the Skipper or Owner.

IN WITNESS whereof the said parties have subscribed their Names on the other Side or Sides hereof on the day against their respective Signatures mentioned.

Abel Joseph Kraus Skipper's Signature.

Geo. Jacques Signature of Witness.

Scale of Provisions to be allowed and served out to the Crew during the Voyage.										
	Bread lb.	Beef lb.	Pork lb.	Flour lb.	Peas pt.	Rice lb.	Tea oz.	Coffee oz.	Sugar oz.	Water qts.
Sunday										
Monday										
Tuesday										
Wednesday ...										
Thursday										
Friday										
Saturday										
SUBSTITUTES.										
<i>Sufficient without waste</i>										

* Here any stipulations for changes or substitution of one article for another may be inserted.
If the provisions are not to be served out daily according to scale, the description of the food should be stated, and should be followed by the words "sufficient without waste."

(1) Here describe the Fishing Expedition.

(2) Here insert June or December, as the case may be.

(3) Here must be specified all matters or things (if any) in respect of which it is agreed that there shall be deductions from Fishing Profits.

(4) Here any stipulations may be inserted to which the parties agree, and which are not contrary to law.

[illegible]

Agreement No. 97127

Share of Fishing Profits.	Share of Salvage.	Witness to Engagement.	Discharge.			Character.		We, the undersigned, hereby release this Trawler, and the Skipper and Owner thereof, from all Claim for Wages, or otherwise, in respect of this Voyage or Expedition.	Witness to Release.
			Date.	Place.	Cause.	Ability.	Conduct.		
(12.)	(13.)	(14.)	(15.)	(16.)	(17.)	(18.)	(19.)	(20.)	(21.)
13/8			Sept 3	Port Charles	Remains			J. Kraus W. Purdy	
1/8			4/12	Port Charles	Remains			Murrell J. Kraus	
1			13	Port Charles	Left Good	Good	Failed to sign	J. Kraus	
—			12/1/94		Remains			George Woodrow J. Kraus	
—			13	Port Charles	Discharge	Good	Good	Richard W. J. Kraus	
1			J. Kraus 8/31	as left	as as			J. H. Rice J. Kraus	
1/8			J. Kraus 12/1/94		Remains			W. Purdy J. Kraus	
			J. Kraus	Port Charles	Left Good	Good	Failed to sign	J. Kraus	
			12/1/94		Remains			Mark J. Kraus	
			J. Kraus 3/1	Port Charles	Discharge	Good	Good	W. Field J. Kraus	

Agreement No. 9712
8

CERTIFICATES,

Or Indorsements or Entries made by H. M. Consuls or by Superintendents of
Mercantile Marine Offices.

MEMORANDA BY SKIPPER.

(The Skipper can here make entries if he finds no room elsewhere.)

Agreement No. 9712₉

Record of every case of Death, Injury, Illtreatment, and Punishment of any Member of the Crew; and of every Casualty to the Trawler or her boat.

HERE RECORD DEATH OR INJURY.			HERE RECORD CASUALTY.		
Name of Person Killed or Injured.	Date and Place of Occurrence.	Nature and Cause of Accident.	Date and Place of Casualty.	Nature of Casualty.	Cause of Casualty.

HERE RECORD ILLTREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT.					
Name of Person Illtreated or Punished.	Name of Person by whom Illtreated or Punished.	Illtreated or Punished.	Date and Place of Illtreatment or Punishment.	If Punished, state for what offence. If Illtreated, say How.	Nature of Illtreatment or Punishment.

NOTE.—The entries in the above Forms are to be made immediately on, or after, the occurrence, and are to be signed by the Skipper and Second Hand, or, if either cannot write, by a member of the Crew, in lieu of the one who cannot write.

Agreement No. 9712
10

Instructions to Skippers and Owners.

1.—The Form on page 9 is sanctioned by the Board of Trade as the form in which the "record" is to be kept, under section 43, in the case of Trawlers of 25 tons register tonnage or upwards. The penalty for not keeping the record on page 9 is £20.

2.—The form on page 11 is to be filled in, cut off down the dotted line, handed or sent to the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office, or to his deputy, whose office is nearest to the place at which the boat arrives, and is to be so handed or sent within twenty-four hours of the boat's first arrival in port after the occurrence. The penalty for not delivering or sending it is £20.

3.—If no death, injury, illtreatment, or punishment occurs during the time the boat is at sea, and if no casualty happens, the forms need not be filled in, and the form on page 11 need not therefore be sent to the Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office.

4.—If the Skipper cannot write the records on pages 9 and 11, they must be made by some member of the Crew, and the Skipper must make his mark. The member of the Crew who makes the entry must sign as a witness. The entry may be made in ink or by a pencil that will not rub out.

Sanctioned by Order of the Board,

THOMAS GRAY,
Assistant Secretary.

October, 1883.

Agreement No. 9712₁₁

Wr. 1. (Fishing.)

REPORT TO SUPERINTENDENT OF A MERCANTILE MARINE OFFICE
OF EVERY DEATH, INJURY, ILLTREATMENT, OR PUNISHMENT,
AND OF EVERY CASUALTY, DURING THE VOYAGE.

(Note.—The Skipper is to make in this Form a duplicate of the entries on page 9, and is to sign this Form.
See Instruction No. 2, on page 10.)

HERE RECORD DEATH OR INJURY.			HERE RECORD CASUALTY.		
Name of Person Killed or Injured.	Date and Place of Occurrence.	Nature and Cause of Accident.	Date and Place of Casualty.	Nature of Casualty.	Cause of Casualty.

HERE RECORD ILLTREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT.					
Name of Person Illtreated or Punished.	Name of Person by whom Illtreated or Punished.	Illtreated or Punished.	Date and Place of Illtreatment or Punishment.	If Punished, state for what offence. If Illtreated, say How.	Nature of Illtreatment or Punishment.

I declare the above to be correct and true,

Skipper.

Witness.

To the Superintendent at the
Mercantile Marine Office

at _____

Crew's Agreement and Account
of Voyages of Aberdeen Steam
Trawler Pioneer, dated 7th January, 1891

Agreement No. 28302

PARTICULARS OF TRAWLER AND EMPLOYMENT.				
Name of Trawler and Port of Registry.		Official Number.	Port—Letters and No.	
HULL		22053	A-398.	
Commencement of Agreement.			Gross Tonnage.	Registered Tonnage.
Date.	Place.			
1. 1. 91	HULL.		112	65

ISSUED BY
THE BOARD OF TRADE,
February, 1890.
In pursuance of
46 & 47 Vict. c. 41.

* If a Steam Vessel, S.S. should be placed before the name.

RUNNING AGREEMENT
AND
ACCOUNT OF VOYAGES AND CREW
OF A
Trawler of 25 Tons or upwards,
ENGAGED IN THE SEA FISHING TRADE;
WITH

A Form of Record and Report of every case of Death, Injury, Illtreatment,
or Punishment of any Member of the Crew; and of every Casualty
to the Smack or her Boat.

NOTICE.—The attendance before the Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office (of Seamen engaged and discharged under this Agreement) is unnecessary; but every Seaman has a right to appeal to the Superintendent if he has any dispute with the Skipper or Owner as to his wages or share of the profits of the voyage or trip, or share in a fishing or catch, or deductions therefrom, or concerning his engagement, service, discharge, account, and settlement.

On whatever date the Agreement is made it expires on the next following 30th day of June or 31st day of December, as the case may be. If, however, the Trawler is absent from the United Kingdom on the 30th day of June or 31st day of December, then this Agreement remains in force until the first arrival of the Trawler at her final port of destination in the United Kingdom after such date, or the discharge of cargo consequent on such arrival.

This Agreement is to be delivered up to the Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office on the 31st December or 30th June, as the case may be; or if the crew are at sea and serving under it on those dates, then it must be delivered to the Superintendent within 48 hours after it has terminated by the discharge of and settlement with the crew; the Superintendent will thereupon issue the Certificate of Deposit (C. C.). Neglect to deposit the returns within the time prescribed by the Merchant Shipping Acts subjects the Owner or Skipper to a penalty.

TO BE FILLED IN BY THE SUPERINTENDENT.		
Termination of Agreement.		
Date.	Place.	Received at
10. 7. 91	HULL.	on the 11th day of July 1891.
		by <i>[Signature]</i> Superintendent.

RECEIVED 10-1-54

Address.

(State No. of House, Street, and Town.)

Robert L. Sayer

Beckwith House
on baby Rd
Hartford

Address.

(State No. of House, Street, and Town.)

James Manton 0360

6 Braemar Terrace
Walcott Flint ^{House 24}

**Full complement
of Crew.
(State No. of Hands
all told.)**

(1)

**Skipper and
2nd Hand*
(if not
Engineer).**

Sailors and Fishermen.

Apprentices and Boys.

Engineers®

Fircurn.

Other Persons.

Total.

Nine

Shipper
2nd Band

Two One 1 9
could be classified under Engineers.

* If the 2nd hand is also the Engineer he should be classified under Engineer.

In what Capacity serving

State against each name whether he—
 (1) Remains;
 (2) Absconded (with date);
 (3) Left, term expired (with date);
 OR
 (4) Died (with cause of death and date)

(APPRENTICES.)

(BOYS UNDER SPECIAL AGREEMENT.)

Agreement No. 28:302
3

REGULATIONS for MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE.
SANCTIONED BY THE BOARD OF TRADE.

No.	OFFENCE.	Amount of Fine.
1	Not being on board at the time fixed by the agreement .	Five Shillings.
2	Not returning on board at the expiration of leave . .	Five Shillings.
3	Striking or assaulting any person on board or belonging to the Ship (if not otherwise prosecuted)	Five Shillings.
4	Bringing or having on board spirituous liquors . .	Five Shillings.
5	Drunkenness. First Offence	Five Shillings.
	Ditto. Second, and for each subsequent Offence	Ten Shillings.
6	Sleeping or gross negligence while on the look-out. .	Five Shillings.
7	Destroying or defacing the copy of the agreement which is made accessible to the Crew	Five Shillings.
8	Man on watch failing to exhibit Lights at proper time .	Five Shillings.
9	If any Officer is guilty of any act or default which is made subject to a Fine, he shall be liable to a Fine of twice the amount which would be exacted for a like act or default from a Seaman, and such fine shall be paid and applied in the same manner as other Fines.	
<hr/>		
NOTE 1.—To enforce these Fines it is necessary that the formalities required by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, s. 256, should be carefully complied with.		
NOTE 2.—Obliterate by crossing through with ink every one of the above Offences, for which no fine is to be inflicted.		

INSTRUCTIONS TO SKIPPERS OF TRAWLERS.

1. The Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats) Act, 1883, requires the Skipper of every Trawler of 25 tons register tonnage and upwards to enter into an agreement with every Seaman whom he carries to sea, or who serves in such trawler as one of the Crew. The agreement must be read over and explained to each Seaman, who will thereupon sign the same in duplicate in the presence of the Skipper, who must attest the signature. This Copy of the Agreement is to be retained by the Skipper; the duplicate copy, printed in red, is to be sent by the Skipper to the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office at the port of departure. The penalty for shipping a Seaman without an Agreement is £5.
2. Every erasure, interlineation, or alteration in any agreement (except additions made for shipping substitutes) is inoperative unless proved to have been made with the consent of all the persons interested therein.
3. Fraudulently altering or making false entry in, or delivering a false copy of any agreement, or being party to such an act, is punishable by a penalty of £20.
4. The Skipper is required on every return of his vessel to a port in the United Kingdom, before the final termination of the agreement, to discharge or engage in the manner herein described any Seaman he discharges or engages at such port; also before he leaves port to endorse on the agreement and sign a statement of the changes made or to be made in his Crew, and to sign and send to the nearest Superintendent a full and accurate statement on a form sanctioned by the Board of Trade of every change which has taken place in his Crew. If the statement is not duly made the Skipper will incur a penalty of £5.
5. The Skipper is, not less than four hours before paying off or discharging any Seaman, unless the Seaman gives notice to the Skipper that he does not require it, to give to him an account in a form sanctioned by the Board of Trade of his wages, and of all deductions to be made therefrom, under a penalty of £5 for non-compliance. When the Skipper or any Seaman is to be paid by a share of the catch, the owner is required, under a penalty of £5, to render to him a full account, in a form sanctioned by the Board of Trade, showing in detail the amounts for which the fish has been sold and all deductions made from those amounts. He must also submit all accounts and books relating to the catch to the man's inspection, on demand made at a reasonable time.
6. Upon paying off or discharging a Seaman, the Skipper is bound, under a penalty of £5, to sign and deliver to him a certificate of discharge; and the Seaman when duly discharged will sign, in the presence of a witness, a release from all claims in respect of the voyage just finished (see page 7 cols. 19 and 20).

Agreement No. 28302

4

I, Robert J. Taylor

Managing Owner of the Trawler referred to on page 2 hereof, hereby acknowledge that I have appointed the Skipper mentioned on page 2 hereof as Skipper for the Fishing Expedition referred to in this Agreement, and hereby accept full responsibility for and undertake the fulfilment of the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

Signed Robert J. Taylor Owner.7 day of January 1891

The several Persons, hereinafter called the Crew, whose names are hereto subscribed, and who are more particularly described herein, hereby agree to serve on board the said Trawler, which is to be employed in a Fishing Expedition ⁽¹⁾ for a period which may extend to the first return to the United Kingdom after the last day of ⁽²⁾ January one thousand eight hundred and eighty 91; but it is hereby expressly agreed, subject to the above stipulation, that the time for finishing the said Expedition shall be solely in the discretion of her owner. And it is understood that the full complement of the Crew upon the said Expedition shall consist of 14 hands all told, as shown on the second page of this form of agreement.

And the Crew agree to conduct themselves in an orderly, faithful, honest, and sober manner, and to be at all times diligent in their respective duties, and to be obedient to the lawful commands of the said Skipper or of any Person who shall lawfully succeed him, and of their Superior Officers, in everything relating to the said Trawler, and the Stores and Cargo thereof, whether on board, in boats, or on shore; And it shall be regarded as falling within the duties of the Crew to keep the nets and outfit, except standing rigging, in repair, supplying all chafing gear where required. In consideration of which Services to be duly performed the said Skipper, with the consent and on behalf of the said Owner, hereby agrees to pay to the said Crew as Wages and Remuneration, the Sums and the Share in the Profits of the said Fishing Expedition against their names respectively expressed, such remuneration to commence from the time so expressed as aforesaid, and to supply them with Provisions as agreed by the statement on page 5 hereof:

And it is hereby agreed, That any Embezzlement or wilful or negligent Destruction of any part of the Trawlers' Cargoes or Stores shall be made good to the Owner out of the Wages of the Person guilty of the same: And that if any person enters himself as qualified for a duty which he proves incompetent to perform, his Wages shall be reduced in proportion to his incompetency.

And it is also agreed, That the Regulations for maintaining discipline sanctioned by the Board of Trade, which are printed on page 3 hereof, except those obliterated in ink in this copy, are adopted by the parties hereto, and shall be regarded as embodied in this Agreement.

And it is also agreed, That for the purpose of ascertaining the amount to which any Member of the Crew is entitled in respect of his share in the Profits, all Fish caught by the said Trawler and her Crew during the said Fishing Expedition shall be sold, and the net amount arising from such Sale, after deducting all usual, customary, and necessary expenses, shall be divided into 14 parts or shares, of which 11 1/2 shares shall be for the Owner of the Trawler, and 2 1/2 shares shall be for the Crew, which last-mentioned shares shall be sub-divided amongst the Crew in the proportions set forth opposite to their respective names in this Agreement.

And it is also agreed, That every Member of the Crew, including Apprentices, shall be regarded as entitled to participate in any sum or sums of money arising from any salvago or salvago services performed for any ship in distress or otherwise, in the proportions set forth opposite to their respective names in this Agreement.

And it is also agreed, That the settlement of all shares of Fishing Profits shall be made within three days after the Trawler's return to Port at the end of Fishing during the Expedition referred to in this Agreement; one day at least before settlement, a full account of the Fish taken, and of the amount for which it is sold, and of all charges and deductions to be made from such amount, or from such shares or any of them, shall be rendered to each Member of the Crew who is to be remunerated wholly or partly by share:

Agreement No. 28302
5

And it is further agreed, That the deductions to be so made from shares of Fishing Profits shall comprise ⁽³⁾

And it is also agreed, That ⁽⁴⁾

And it is also agreed, That if any Member of the Crew considers himself to be aggrieved by any breach of the Agreement or otherwise, he shall represent the same to the Skipper or Officer in charge of the Trawler in a quiet and orderly manner, who shall thereupon take such steps as the case may require.

And it is also agreed, That the Skipper shall afford to every Member of the Crew reasonable facilities for appealing to a Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office in the event of his dissatisfaction with his account and settlement.

And it is further agreed, That any Member of the Crew shall be liable to dismissal upon ⁽²⁾ hours' notice given to him by the said Skipper and Owner and upon being paid the amount, if any, to which he is entitled in respect of his Wages or Share to the date of dismissal; and further, that any Member of the Crew may claim his discharge at the time of any of the Settlements above referred to, upon giving a similar previous notice to the Skipper or Owner.

In witness whereof the said parties have subscribed their Names on the other Side or Sides hereof on the day against their respective Signatures mentioned.

James Macdonald Skipper's Signature.

A. J. Beattie Signature of Witness.

Scale of Provisions to be allowed and served out to the Crew during the Voyage.										
	Bread lb.	Beef lb.	Pork lb.	Flour lb.	Peas pt.	Rice lb.	Tea oz.	Coffee oz.	Sugar oz.	Water qts.
Sunday										
Monday										
Tuesday										
Wednesday ..										
Thursday ..										
Friday										
Saturday ..										
SUBSTITUTES.										
<p>* Here any stipulations for changes or substitution of one article for another may be inserted. If the provisions are not to be served out daily according to scale, the description of the food should be stated, and should be followed by the words "sufficient without waste."</p>										

- (1) Here describe the Fishing Expedition.
 (2) Here insert June or December, as the case may be.
 (3) Here must be specified all matters or things (if any) in respect of which it is agreed that there shall be deductions from Fishing Profits.
 (4) Here any stipulations may be inserted to which the parties agree, and which are not contrary to law.

Agreement No 28302

(1.) Reference No.	(2.) SIGNATURES OF CREW.	(3.) Capacity.	(4.) Age.	(5.) Town or County where born.	(6.) Date of present Engage- ment.	(7.) When to be on Board.	(8.) Wages per Week.	(9.) Amount of Advance.	(10.) Amount of Weekly Allotment	(11.) To whom to be paid.	(12.) Share of Profits
1	James Hanton	Skipper. Cert. No. 0360	39	Hull	7/1/91	at once	-	-	as arranged	wife	1/3
2	Wm Peacham	2nd Hand Cert. No. 0363	37	London	7/1/91	do	-	-	do	wife	1/3
3	B F Lewis	Boat	26	Cardiff	7/1/91	do	22/-	-	22/-	wife	
4	John Richardson	3 rd H	24	Leeds	do	do	20/-	-	20/-	wife	
5	John Pether	Deck H	29	Sheffield	do	do	18/-	-	18/-	no wife	
6	F. G. Hird	Cook	18	Hull	do	do	16/-	-	-	self	
7	T. B. W. W. W.	50	Dartmouth	do	do	£3	-	£3	wife		
8	T. Phillip	2 nd L	29	Haverham	do	do	35/-	-	25/-	wife	
9	C. Heald	Fireman	36	Hull	do	do	30/-	-	30/-	wife	
10	H. W. W. W.	Fireman	28	Hull	16/1/91	do	30/-	-	30/-	Self	
11	James Barber	2 nd Hand 1934	29	Hull	21/1/91	do	-	-	as earned	wife	1/3
12	Henry Utter	Fireman	30	Bradford	30/1/91	do	35/-	-	25/-	wife	
13	W. Jones	2 nd Hand no 1311	29	Millfield	21/1/91	do	18/-	-	18/-	wife	
14	James W. W. W.	31	Norfolk	do	-	-	-	-	X	wife	1/3
	Benjamin Bauwgen	Mate no 06609	39	Norfolk	8 th April	=	=	=	=	wife	1/3

3302

Agreement No. 28302

7

To whom to be paid.	Share of Fishing Profits.	Share of Salvage.	Witness to Engagement.	Discharge.			Character.		We, the undersigned, hereby release this Trawler, and the Skipper and Owner thereof, from all Claim for Wages, or otherwise, in respect of this Voyage or Expedition.	Witness to Release.
				Date.	Place.	Cause.	Ability.	Conduct.		
(11.)	(12.)	(13.)	(14.)	(15.)	(16.)	(17.)	(18.)	(19.)	(20.)	(21.)
wife	1/8		At Newport	7/4/91	Keyland	Disch'd				
wife	1/8		At B.	2/1/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	William Pearson	At B.
wife			At B.	7/5/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	Richd Lewis	At B.
wife			At B.	10/4/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	John Richardson	At B.
Mrs. Liven			At B.	2/3/91	Keyland	Disch'd	Disch'd	Disch'd	Failed to sign off	At B.
self			At B.	7/5/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	J. G. Thord	At B.
wife			At B.	10/4/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	Bozelle	At B.
wife			At B.	do	do	do	V.G.	V.G.	J. Kelly	At B.
wife			At B.	15/1/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	E. Heald	At B.
Self			John Manton	26/1/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	Mason	At B.
wife	1/8		At B.	7/4/91	Keyland	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	Failed to sign off	At B.
wife			At B.	7/5/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	H. Thord	At B.
wife			John Manton	4/4/91	Keyland	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	Failed to sign off	
wife	1/8		R. S. Lewis	10/7/91	Hull	Disch'd	V.G.	V.G.	Daniel Hord	At B.
wife	1/8		R. S. Lewis	do	do	do	V.G.	V.G.	his signature	At B.

Agreement No. 28302

8

[illegible]

Share of Fishing Profits.	Share of Salvage.	Witness to Engagement.	Discharge.			Character.		We, the undersigned, hereby release this Trawler, and the Skipper and Owner thereof, from all Claim for Wages, or otherwise, in respect of this Voyage or Expedition.	Witness to Release.
			Date.	Place.	Cause.	Ability.	Conduct.		
(12.)	(13.)	(14.)	(15.)	(16.)	(17.)	(18.)	(19.)	(20.)	(21.)
—		H. I. L.	11/1/91	ill	ill	vg	vg	failed to sign off	
—		13/1/91	11/5/91	ill	ill	vg	vg	failed to sign off	
—		R. I. S.	12/6/91	ill	ill	vg	vg	failed to sign off	ALB
—		R. I. S.	12/7/91	do	do	vg	vg	failed to sign off	ALB
—		R. I. S.	do	do	do	vg	vg	failed to sign off	ALB
—		R. I. S.	do	do	do	vg	vg	failed to sign off	ALB
—		R. I. S.	do	do	do	vg	vg	failed to sign off	ALB
—		J. B.	12/4/91	ill	ill	vg	vg	failed to sign off	ALB

Agreement No. 28302
10

CERTIFICATES,

Or Indorsements or Entries made by H. M. Consuls or by Superintendents of
Mercantile Marine Offices.

MEMORANDA BY SKIPPER.

(The Skipper can here make entries if he finds no room elsewhere.)

*On January - 17th 1891 when 80 miles from Spurn Buoys
S.W. Broke Thrust-shaft & got home without assistance or
as far as Grimsby when we got a tug paying 4 pounds
& 2 £ to Seagull from roads to dock*

Record of every case of Death, Injury, Illtreatment, and Punishment of any Member of the Crew; and of every Casualty to the Trawler or her boat.

HERE RECORD DEATH OR INJURY.						
Date and Place of Death or Injury.	Name of Person Deceased or Injured.	Age.	Capacity.	Nationality, stating Birthplace.	Last Place of Abode.	Nature and Cause of Death or Injury.* (See Footnotes.)
HERE RECORD CASUALTY.						
Date and Place of Casualty.	Nature of Casualty.			Cause of Casualty.		
17/1/91 at Sea 80 miles from Spurn	Broke Thrust Shaft & thereby become Disabled			An old screw in the iron		
HERE RECORD ILLTREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT.						
Date and Place of Illtreatment or Punishment.	Name of Person Illtreated or Punished.	Name of Person by whom Illtreated or Punished.	Illtreated or Punished.	If Punished, state for what offence. If Illtreated, say How.	Nature of Illtreatment or Punishment.	

- * 1. When the cause of death is Disease the name or nature of the same should be stated.
- 2. When the cause of death is Accidental the circumstances attending the accident should be fully stated.
- 3. If at the time of an Accidental Death the vessel sustained any damage, loss of gear, cargo, &c., the nature of such damage or loss should be stated.
- 4. If the death is occasioned by any other cause, full particulars of the same should be stated.

NOTE.—The entries in the above Forms are to be made immediately on, or after, the occurrence, and are to be signed by the Skipper and Second Hand, or, if either cannot write, by a member of the Crew, in lieu of the one who cannot write.

Agreement No. 28302
12

Instructions to Skippers and Owners.

1.—The Form on page 11 is sanctioned by the Board of Trade as the form in which the "record" is to be kept, under section 43, in the case of Trawlers of 25 tons register tonnage or upwards. The penalty for not keeping the record on page 11 is £20.

2.—The form on page 13 is to be filled in, *cut off down the dotted line*, handed or sent to the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office, or to his deputy, whose office is nearest to the place at which the boat arrives, and is to be so handed or sent within twenty-four hours of the boat's first arrival in port after the occurrence. The penalty for not delivering or sending it is £20.

3.—If no death, injury, illtreatment, or punishment occurs during the time the boat is at sea, and if no casualty happens, the forms need not be filled in, and the form on page 13 need not therefore be sent to the Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office.

4.—If the Skipper cannot write, the records on pages 11 and 13 must be made by some member of the Crew, and the Skipper must make his mark. The member of the Crew who makes the entry must sign as a witness. The entry may be made in ink or with a pencil.

Sanctioned by Order of the Board,

GEORGE J. SWANSTON,

Assistant Secretary.

February, 1888.

Report and Balance Sheet
of the Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels
Engineers' and Firemen's Union,
dated 31st December, 1897

GRIMSBY STEAM FISHING VESSELS

ENGINEERS' and FIREMEN'S
UNION.

REGISTERED OFFICE - - - - 8, RIBY SQUARE.

President -

WILLIAM WESTON

Trustees -

WILLIAM GEORGE FANCY ; HENRY STACEY.

Treasurer -

JOHN TAYLOR, Senr.

Medical Officer -

DR. C. L. GRANVILLE CHAPMAN, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

For the Seven Months ending 31st December, 1897.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE YEAR 1897

582.

BELLOW MEMBERS,

It is with much pleasure and satisfaction that I submit to your notice, this, my second Report and Balance Sheet. I am glad to be able to say that our labours in the cause of Trade Unionism have been awarded with a fair amount of success. As you know it is but twelve months since, that we were lamentably divided and unable to protect ourselves in the least against any attack made upon our interests, whereas we are now a body of some 500 men combined together for mutual protection, our aim being to assist each other in times of adversity and to do all in our power to maintain our just rights and liberties as working men. I hope this statement will not be misconstrued by any of you into a declaration of anything in the shape of hostility on our part. It is simply meant to be a note of comparison relative to our position of twelve months ago and today. I may add, I believe that you are as sincere as I am myself in expressing the wish that the amicable relationship at present existing between the employers and ourselves may long continue, our idea being defiance, not defiance. We have reason to congratulate ourselves upon the extent of the progress made by the Union during the past seven months, especially when we take into consideration the serious drawback we have had to contend with: I refer to the great engineering dispute, which commenced six months ago, and which has to a certain extent been the cause of the labour market here being flooded with men, making it far more difficult for some amongst you to obtain employment than it would otherwise have been. It has also been the cause of the detention of a considerable number of new vessels (owing to want of

machinery) destined for this port, thereby preventing
us from adding correspondingly to our membership. 583.

Still we ought not to complain as there are others who have felt the dire effects of the struggle far more keenly than we have, and to whom we have rendered what little assistance we were able. It is to be hoped that this dispute will be a great lesson to the workers at large, not merely by every individual joining a Union, but by the Unions themselves, both great and small, combining into one powerful Trades' Federation, and so reduce the danger of encroachment upon our most vital interests by Capitalism to a minimum. The workers have learned something of the power and possibilities of combination, but have yet a deal to learn, the Capitalist being far ahead of us in this direction.

I will not enumerate in detail the various incidents connected with our ~~own~~ work during the past seven months as you are mostly familiar with them. Suffice it to say that we have gained several little victories through the Society, which, had we been divided, would without doubt have been lost to us. One member in particular receiving substantial evidence of what combination has been able to do for him.

Whilst having had a number of claims upon the Accident Fund we have been providentially favoured by not having lost a member through death, and for which we should be thankful.

	£	s	d
You will be pleased to know that our income for the seven months amounted to	322	6	10
Being an increase over the previous eight months' returns of	143	17	0
After paying all Liabilities from the General Fund we have been able to add to it	180	13	7
Our income to the Accident and Sick Relief Fund was	47	4	5
Amount of claims paid from same being	17	13	4
Making a clear addition to the funds for the seven months of	210	4	8

This I consider is most gratifying and should urge 584.

us on, one and all, to exert ourselves to the utmost to
make the Union a still greater success, thanking those
amongst you who have freely given me your co-operation
and assistance in carrying on the (not always pleasant)
duties devolving upon me.

I am,

Yours fraternally,

JOHN COLLINS.
Secretary

BALANCE SHEET
for the Seven months ending 31st Dec., 1897.

RECEIPTS			EXPENDITURE		
	£	s d		£	s d
To balance from last account in bank	104	13 7	By Secretary's Salary	45	0 0
Entrance Fees	39	0 6	Rent & Rates	15	1 9 1/2
Contributions	231	3 6	Coal & Gas	1	5 10 1/2
Accident & Sick Relief Fund	46	17 5	Postage & Telegrams	4	11 11
Cards	2	1 1	Stationery & Printing	4	11 11
Rules	18	4	Alteration of Office,	5	5 0
Loan of Club Room	6	0	Joiners Account	5	16 3
Bank Interest £1 13 0			Painter's Account	5	16 3
	7	0	Donations —		
	2	0 0	Penrhyn Quarrymen	3	0 0
			Engineering Dispute	5	0 0
			General Labourers' Union	2	10 0
			Audit Fee	1	0 0
			Window Repairing &		
			Blind Fitting	14	7 1/2
			Rail Fares	6	2
			Contributions refunded	14	6
			Bros. Rowbotham &		
			Blackburn for services rendered	10	0
			Accident Pay	17	13 4
			Unemployed Donation	10	6
			Newspaper & Incidental	2	17 6
			Balance in Bank —		
			Sick Fund	50	7 8
			General Fund	262	10 7
			In Hand Fund	2	0 0
				314	18 3
Total	£427	0 5	Total	£427	0 5

ACCIDENT PAYMENTS.

NAMES OF MEMBERS.	No. of WEEKS.	DAYS.	£	s	d.
William Wilcock	2	3	1	5	0
Charles Perry	3	5	1	18	4
John Ward	1	2		13	4
Charles W. Major	2	5	1	8	4
Thos. Mountain	4	0	2	0	0
Samuel Norton	2	1	1	1	8
Robert Thompson	3	2	1	13	4
John Osborne	4	0	2	0	0
William Weston	2	5	1	8	4
Walter Vince	5	0	2	10	0
John B. Barker	1	4		16	8
Michael Colbridge	1	5		18	4
Total -			17	13	4

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we have, this day, audited the foregoing Accounts for the seven months ending 31st December, 1897, and find the same sufficiently vouched and correct.

FRANCIS HENRY THOMPSON,

CHARLES ROBERT JOHN COULDSTONE,
Members of the Union.

26th January, 1898.

✖ 1

Agreement between the Grimsby Fishing Vessel
Owners' Association and the Grimsby
Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union,
dated 27th November, 1899.

COPY

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GRIMSBY FISHING VESSEL OWNERS' ASSOCIATION LIMITED
AND THE GRIMSBY STEAM FISHING VESSELS ENGINEERS' AND FIREMEN'S UNION whereby
it is mutually agreed as follows:-

- Clause 1. That in all steam fishing vessels of seventy nominal H. P. and upwards the engine room ordinary staff shall consist of two Engineers and one Trimmer. The Trimmers wages shall not exceed one pound per week. When such vessels fish at Faroe or Iceland two of the Deck Hands shall be available as Firemen or Trimmers for the purposes required on the passages out and home. When fishing in the North Sea one deck hand only will be available for the purposes of the passages.
- Clause 2. That in all steam fishing vessels of fifty to sixty-nine nominal H.P. the engine-room ordinary staff shall consist of two engineers and one Trimmer. The Trimmers wages shall not exceed sixteen shilling per week. When such last mentioned vessels fish at Iceland or Faroe two of the deck hands shall be available as Trimmers or Firemen on the passage but when fishing in the North Sea no assistance whatever shall be required from the deck department. The duties of the Trimmer shall be to assist in the stokehold trim coals &c. He shall trim and keep clean all deck lamps also duck lamps where used. The engine-room staff will be held responsible for the getting up ashes and the proper oiling of the deck winch and rolling gear on deck on all vessels referred to in Clauses 1 and 2 and affected by this Agreement and the Trimmers' hours of work in such vessels shall be from 6a.m. to 6 p.m. and sleep in all night. Cases of emergency excepted.
- Clause 3. The Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union do guarantee to supply all the Trimmers necessary to man all the steamers affected by this agreement and further guarantee that in the event of the Union being unable at any time to obtain a Trimmer when required that they will forthwith give notice to the Owners and the enginemen will proceed to sea as usual upon the old system of working viz: - Coals to be trimmed and ashes got up by the deck hands for the time being.
- Clause 4. That no boys or any person other than those belonging to the ship be allowed in the engineroom and none but those duly authorised be allowed on board whilst the vessel is in dock.
- Clause 5. That the Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners Association issue instructions to the Masters of all steam fishing vessels under fifty nominal H.P. and not affected by this agreement requesting them to permit coals being trimmed and ashes got up as far as possible when required by the enginemen during daylight hours for preference.
- Clause 6. That this agreement made and agreed to by the Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association Limited on the one part and The Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' And Firemen's Union on the other part shall be considered as binding on both parties and in consideration thereof our signatures are appended thereto.

Made at Grimsby 27th of November one thousand eight hundred and ninety nine.

For the Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association,

W. SOLERVILLE LETTEN, President.

W. T. DUNLIN, Vice-President.

B. J. AVERY, Secretary.

For the Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Firemen's Union,

WILLIAM WESTON, President.

RICHARD STANFORTH, Vice-President.

JOHN COLLINS, Secretary.

**SPECIAL NOTICE to Members of the Grimsby Steam
Fishing Vessels Engineers' and Fireman's Union.**

All Firemen and Trimmers will be required to join the Union subject to the following conditions which will be rigorously enforced.

- (a) Firemen and Trimmers will not be allowed to take a position as Second Engineman until they have served a period of two years as a Fireman or Trimmer (solely in the Engine Room Department). No Fireman or Trimmer under the age of 20 will be considered eligible for the position of Engineman under any circumstances.
- (b) Any Trimmer or Fireman taking or attempting to take a berth as Second Engineman before having completed the stipulated time of service as hereinbefore mentioned will by so doing forfeit all moneys paid by him or his representatives into the Union and will be expelled therefrom.
- (c) Trimmers will be required to pay the following subscriptions:-

Initiation Fee	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5s. Od.
Contributions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4d. per week.

 And will be entitled to all Benefits of the Union.

Members all earnestly requested to assist in enforcing the foregoing regulations

JOHN COLLINS, Secretary.

APPENDIX 5

Scale of Payments and Conditions of Employment
issued by Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessel
Owners' Association, dated 24th November, 1913.

10.—ABERDEEN STEAM FISHING VESSELS OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, LTD.

A

TAKE NOTICE

That the following will be the SCALE OF PAYMENTS and
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:—

B

ALL FISH (excluding Livers and Roes, which shall be a perquisite of the deck Crews), SHALL BE SOLD. From the GROSS Price realised there shall be deducted:—Salesmen's Commission, at the rate of five per cent.; Discount to the Fishbuyers at the rate of 2d. per £ on said gross price; One Penny for every box used for the fish landed; the cost of all labour handling the fish till they are taken over by the Buyers; all Ice and Coals required for the trip on which the fish were caught; all Harbour, Market, and Water Dues; the cost of Watching, Dan Outfit, Baskets and Stores. The NETT Balance shall be divided into 14 Shares, whereof:—

The MASTER shall be paid *one and three-eighths* of such shares.

The MATE or FIRST FISHERMAN shall be paid *one and one-eighth* of such shares.

8

The SECOND FISHERMAN *on a vessel 97 feet in length (B.P.) and under* shall get 5s. per day, with 4d. per £ on the foresaid nett balance, and *on a vessel 97 feet in length (B.P.) and upwards* 5s. per day, with 3d. per £ on the foresaid nett balance.

C

The DECKHANDS shall get 5s. per day, and, in addition, a Bonus, in terms of the annexed Table.

D

The COOK shall get 5s. per day, and, in addition, a Bonus, in terms of the annexed Table.

E

The ENGINEER shall get 8s. 4d. per day.

F

The SECOND ENGINEER shall get 6s. 10d. per day.

The TRIMMER and ASSISTANT DECKHAND shall get 5s. per day, and, in addition, a Bonus, in terms of the annexed Table.

G

A *Bonus Table.*

For every Settling for a period of SEVEN DAYS or over where the Gross Earnings for each day on an average amount to £15 and under £22 : 10s. 5/-

If such Gross Earnings average £22 : 10s. and under £30 per day 7/6

C If such Gross Earnings average £30 per day or upwards 10/-

D

No FISH shall be given away by the Crew to Fish Labourers or to any one else.

E

By order,

GEO. F. PAUL,
*Secretary, Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessels
Owners' Association Limited.*

F

JOS. F. DUNCAN,
*Secretary, Scottish Steam Fishing Vessels
Enginemen's and Firemen's Union.*

G

WILLIAM H. CRESSY,
*Secretary, Port of Hull Fishermen's Protection
Society (Aberdeen Branch).*

ABERDEEN, 24th November 1913

APPENDIX 6

Crews' Wages List issued by
Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessel Owners' Association,
dated 14th November, 1919.

Aberdeen Steam Fishing Vessels Owners' Association, Limited.

- ✓ 1. Master, $1\frac{1}{2}$ of Fourteenth Share of Nett Money. Bonus of £10 per £2000 for 6 Months, and £1 per £100 for all over £2000.
(a) Master will be paid 11/- per day when vessels are under survey or repair.
- ✓ 2. Mate, $1\frac{1}{2}$ of Fourteenth Share of Nett Money.
(a) And 10/- per day shore pay when vessels are under survey or repair.
- ✓ 3. Second Fishermen will be paid 11/6 per day, with 3d. per £ on nett proceeds of catch on vessels of 97 feet and over, and 4d. per £ on nett catch of vessels under 97 feet.
- ✓ 4. Chief Engineer, 18/- per day.
- ✓ 5. Second Engineer, 16/6 per day.
- ✓ 6. Firemen, 13/6 per day.
- ✓ 7. Deck-hands, Cooks, and Deck-hand Trimmers, 11/6 per day with Bonuses and Perquisites as formerly.
- ✓ 8. Shore Pay during Boiler Cleaning, Survey, or Repairs, will be as follows :

Deck-hands, Cooks, and Firemen,	9/8
2nd Fishermen,	9/8
Chief Engineer,	14/-
Second Engineer,	12/6
9. The Crews of all vessels making trips of 10 days or more will be allowed one day ashore after settling day, the time to count from day of leaving Port until the settling day, both days included. The men undertake to leave the Ship provisioned and ready for next voyage. The Crew not to be paid for the day ashore.
10. The usual members of the Crew will assist in landing the catch.
(a) In the event of any member of the Crew failing to turn up without reasonable cause, the amount paid to the substitute shall be deducted from his pay at settling.
11. Sunday Boats—boats in Harbour over Sunday—to carry a crew of nine men, namely:—Master, Mate, 2nd Fisherman, 2 Deck-hands, Cook, Chief Engineer, Second Engineer, and Trimmer Deck-hand.
(a) When working north of Pentland Firth, boats of 100 feet and under to carry nine men. Boats above 100 feet to carry one extra Deck-hand Trimmer. Total Stocker on Sunday Boats to be 10/- per man per week.
12. Boats of 115 feet to 125 feet will carry a crew of ten men, namely:—Master, Mate, 2nd Fisherman, 2 Deck-hands, 1 Spare Hand, Cook, Chief Engineer, 2nd Engineer, and 1 Fireman. On vessels of 115 to 125 feet the Spare Hand will become part of the Engine-room staff upon the voyage to and from the fishing grounds. On arrival at the fishing grounds he becomes one of the deck crew, and participates in all Deck-hand Perquisites. Boats over 125 feet will carry a crew of 11 men, namely:—Master, Mate, 2nd Fisherman, 3 Deck-hands, Cook, Chief Engineer, 2nd Engineer, and two Firemen. All hands carried in excess of above to be charged through expenses.
13. Bonuses and Perquisites as formerly.

APPENDIX

Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order, 1943;
Constitution and Rules of the Trawler
Fishermen's National Pool Committee.

ESSENTIAL WORK (TRAWLER FISHING) ORDER, 1943Draft Constitution and Rules of the Trawler Fishermen's National Pool CommitteeTITLE

1. The Committee shall be called the Trawler Fishermen's National Pool Committee (hereinafter referred to as the "National Committee").

OBJECTIONS AND FUNCTIONS

2. The objects and functions of the National Committee shall be as follows:-

(a) The National Committee shall be responsible for matters of National Policy, and shall control the National Administration of the Schemes made in pursuance of the Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order, subject to any directions which may be given to it on behalf of the Minister of Labour.

(b) The National Committee shall prepare a Scheme under the Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order and shall in the first place submit a draft of the scheme to Regional Committees, who shall consult Port Committees, where those have been established. The views of the Regional and Port Committees shall be taken into consideration by the National Committee.

(c) The National Committee shall be responsible for submitting schemes made in pursuance of the Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order to the Minister of Labour for his approval.

(d) The National Committee, shall, from time to time, in consultation with the Regional Committees determine the number of Trawler Men, or any class or description of such men to be on the live register for each port within the region.

(e) The National Committee shall have power to transfer men within a Region or from Region to Region.

(f) The National Committee shall be furnished with such statistics and information in relation to schemes, as it may from time to time require.

CONSTITUTION3. Membership

(i) The National Committee shall consist of representative members appointed by the Regional Committees which operate in the four regions into which the country has been divided for the purpose of the Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order in the following allocation:-

North East Region
North Shields and
Hartlepool and
Hull (Scarborough)
Grimsby

3 Representatives of Owners
3 Representatives of Labour

Scottish Region
Dundee
Aberdeen
Granton and
Newhaven

2 Representatives of Owners
2 Representatives of Labour

South Wales Region
Milford Haven
Cardiff
Swansea

2 Representatives of Owners
2 Representatives of Labour

Fleetwood Region
Fleetwood

1 Representative of Owners
1 Representative of Labour

Such Representatives need not necessarily be members of the Regional Committee appointing such Representatives, always provided that such Representatives shall be Members of the Organisations represented on the Regional Committee.

(ii) Members of the National Committee shall be elected annually.

(iii) The Members of the National Committee shall retire annually and shall be eligible for reappointment. Casual vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as that in which the original appointments were made. A Member appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall serve until the end of the current year.

(iv) In the event of any Member not being able to attend a Meeting, the organisation of which he is a representative, shall have the right to appoint a Deputy to act in his stead, always provided that such a Deputy shall be a Member of the Organisation to which such member belongs.

4. Officials

(a) The National Committee shall have power to appoint a Secretary and to pay such remuneration as the Committee may from time to time decide.

(b) The National Committee shall have power to appoint such other officials and to pay such remuneration as they shall from time to time determine.

(c) The National Committee shall have power to engage any persons whom the Committee may find necessary to assist them in the discharge of their duties and to pay such fees in respect thereof.

(d) The Chairman shall be elected annually, and the office shall be held in alternate years by (a) the nominee of the Representatives of the Trawler Owners' Associations, and (b) the nominee of the Representatives of the Trade Union Organisations. The first Chairman shall be the nominee of the Representatives of the Trawler Owners' Associations.

(e) The Vice-Chairman shall be elected annually, and the office shall be held in alternate years by (a) the nominee of the Representatives of the Trawler Owners' Association, and (b) the nominee of the Representatives of the Trade Union Organisations.

The first Vice-Chairman shall be the nominee of the Representatives of the Trade Union Organisations.

The Vice-Chairman, in the absence of the Chairman, shall be the acting Chairman of the National Committee.

In the case of the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, the National Committee shall elect a Chairman for the purpose of that meeting.

5. Offices

The Offices shall be in London for the time being, and the National Committee shall have power to alter this, if they think advisable.

6. Meetings

The Meetings shall be convened by the Secretary and shall be held quarterly, and at such other times as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, after consultation, consider advisable.

A quorum shall consist of not less than three members of the National Committee on each side of the Committee.

7. Sub-Committees

The National Committee may appoint sub-committees for such purposes as may be determined so always that the employers and the unions shall be equally represented on such sub-committees.

Sub-committees shall observe such regulations as may be determined by the National Committee and shall report to the National Committee on all questions referred to them for consideration.

The National Committee shall have the power of appointing on sub-committees or allowing sub-committees to co-opt such persons of special knowledge not being members of the National Committee as may serve the special purposes of the National Committee provided that any such appointed or co-opted members shall serve only in a consultative capacity.

8. Voting

Decisions shall be come to, as far as practicable, by mutual agreement but when voting is necessary it shall be by show of hands. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall each have one vote only.

No resolution shall be declared to be carried unless it has been approved by a majority of the members present on each side of the National Committee.

PROCEDURE FOR SETTLING DIFFERENCES

9. Any question in dispute regarding the administration of the scheme raised by a Port Committee shall be referred to the appropriate Regional Committee and if the question is not thereby resolved it shall be referred to the National Committee. Questions affecting a region which cannot be settled by the Regional Committee should similarly be referred to the National Committee; provided that the National Committee may itself require any question to be submitted to it for its determination. The National Committee shall determine any question referred to it under this procedure.

AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

10. Alterations in the Constitution of the National Committee shall be made only at a meeting especially called for that purpose. Notices of such amendment setting out particulars of the proposals must be submitted to members at least two months before the date fixed for the special meeting.

FINANCE

11. (a) Reserve Pool Funds shall be provided by a levy on the gross sales of each voyage of each trawler registered under the scheme. The levy shall be chargeable as an expense of the voyage for the purpose of settling with the crew.
- (b) The collection of such levy shall be the duty of the Trawler Owners' Associations at each Port and the amount collected at the end of each weekly accounting period.
- (c) The British Trawlers' Federation Ltd. shall be empowered to hold such funds on behalf of the Committee, but such fund shall be under the direct control of the National Committee.
- (d) At intervals to be decided by the National Committee details of receipts and expenditure of each Trawler Owners' Association in respect of the Management of Pool Funds shall be submitted to the Committee.
- (e) The amount to be levied for the purposes of Pool Funds and the system to be applied in respect of the Adjustment and Reconciliation of such levies shall be determined by the National Committee after consultation with the Accountant.

(f) Expenses chargeable against the Pool Funds shall be as follows:-

(i) Payments made to fishermen whilst in the Reserve Pools.

(ii) Payments made in respect of Travelling and Subsistence Allowances to Fishermen transferred from Port to Port under the Provisions of the Scheme.

(iii) All Administration Expenses in connection with the National, Regional and Port Committees.

(iv) Expenses incurred by Representatives in attending Meetings of the National, Regional and Port Committees.

RATES OF PAY

12. Immediately upon the commencement of the Schemes under the Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order, 1943, the rates of pay which shall apply to fishermen whilst in the Reserve Pool shall be as follows:-

(a) Skippers 15/- per day

(b) Mates and Chief Engineers 12/6 per day

(c) All other ratings 10/- per day

These rates shall apply until such time as the Committee determine otherwise.

ESSENTIAL WORK (TRAWLER FISHING) ORDER 1943
TRAWLER SCHEME - FCR

SCOTTISH REGION

For the purposes of this trawler scheme (hereinafter referred to as "the scheme") "the region" is the region extending along the coast from Aberdeen to Newhaven and Granton, and the ports included in the region are the following:- Aberdeen, Newhaven and Granton.

1. PRINCIPAL OBJECTS.

The principal objects of the scheme are

- (a) To secure the efficient and economical operation of British trawlers by the provisions of an adequate, regular and mobile labour force for the purpose of trawler fishing by undertakings carried on by trawler owners; and
- (b) To regularise trawler fishing by the continuous employment of trawler men and the registration of such men, of trawler owners and of British trawlers.

2. ADMINISTRATION.

- (a) There shall be a Regional Committee consisting of -

Two members nominated by THE ABERDEEN STEAM FISHING VESSELS OWNERS' ASSOCIATION LIMITED, Two members nominated by THE NEWHAVEN AND GRANTON TRAWLER OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, and One member nominated by THE ABERDEEN SKIPPERS' AND MATES' ASSOCIATION, Two members nominated by THE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION, One member nominated by THE GRANTON AND LEITH TRAWLERS' SKIPPERS' AND MATES' PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION.

- (b) There shall be a Port Committee in each Port consisting of -

In Aberdeen:- Two members nominated by THE ABERDEEN STEAM FISHING VESSELS OWNERS' ASSOCIATION LIMITED, One member nominated by THE ABERDEEN SKIPPERS' AND MATES' ASSOCIATION, and One member nominated by THE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION.

In Granton:- Two members nominated by THE NEWHAVEN AND GRANTON TRAWLER OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, One member nominated by THE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION, and One Member nominated by THE GRANTON AND LEITH TRAWLERS' SKIPPERS' AND MATES' PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION.

- (c) The Regional Committee and each Port Committee may appoint a Secretary to act on its behalf;
- (d) Subject to the provisions of this Scheme and any directions issued thereunder by the National Committee, the Regional Committee, or any Port Committee, the administration of the Scheme shall vest as follows:-

In the Port of Aberdeen:- THE ABERDEEN STEAM FISHING VESSELS OWNERS' ASSOCIATION.

In the Ports of Newhaven and Granton:- THE NEWHAVEN AND GRANTON TRAWLER OWNERS' ASSOCIATION.

- (e) Every member of the Regional Committee and of any Port Committee shall be entitled to appoint a deputy to act in his place in the event of his being unable to be present at a Meeting of any such Committee of which he is a member;
- (f) The Regional Committee and each Port Committee shall appoint annually from its own body a Chairman and the office shall be held in alternate years by (a) the nominee of the representatives of the Trawler Owners' Associations, and (b) the nominee of the representatives of the Trade Union Organisations, the first Chairman shall be the nominee of the Representatives of the Trawler Owners' Associations.

3. FUNCTIONS OF REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

- (a) The Regional Committee shall be responsible for matters of regional policy and shall control the regional administration of the scheme, subject to any directions which may be given to it by the National Committee, including any directions given to that Committee by or on behalf of the Minister and transmitted by that Committee to the Regional Committee;
- (b) The Regional Committee shall from time to time, in consultation with the National Committee, determine the number of trawler men, or any class or description of such men, to be on the live register for each port within the region. For the purpose of any such determination, the National Committee shall comply with any directions that may be given from time to time by the Minister, and the Minister shall, before giving any such directions, consult with the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries or, in respect of a region in Scotland, with the Scottish Home Department;
- (c) The Regional Committee shall be responsible -
 - (i) for the transfer of trawler men between ports within the region; and
 - (ii) Subject to any directions of the National Committee for the requisitioning of trawler men from other regions and the transfer of trawler men from the region;
- (d) The Regional Committee shall determine, or failing any determination shall refer to the National Committee for settlement, any questions in dispute regarding the administration of the scheme which may be referred to it by a Port Committee, and any questions on Regional matters which cannot be settled by the Regional Committee shall be referred by that Committee to the National Committee, provided that the National Committee may itself require any such question to be submitted to it for its determination;
- (e) The Regional Committee shall furnish such statistics in relation to the scheme as the National Committee or the Minister may from time to time require.

4. FUNCTIONS OF PORT COMMITTEES.

- (a) Each Port Committee shall set up and maintain a register of all trawler owners at the port, and a register of all British trawlers at the port, and remove from the register of trawler owners the name of any such owner, either at his own request or under direction from the National Committee, the Regional Committee or the Minister, and may from time to time amend the register of British trawlers;
- (b) Each Port Committee -
 - (i) Shall set up and maintain a live register at the port of trawler men, and may keep separate sections in that register for any class or description of trawler men;

- (ii) Shall enter in the live register the names of all men who on 14th April, 1945 were employed as members of the crew (including apprentices) of a British trawler registered at the port under the scheme;
- (iii) Shall receive at such times as may be notified at the port applications from skippers and mates, engineers and other persons with experience in trawler fishing who wish to be entered in the live register, and according to the number of men or any class or description of men to be entered in the live register enter therein the names of such applicants as it thinks fit, provided that the Committee shall give preferential consideration to the applications of men who have been regularly engaged as the members of the crew of a British trawler registered at the port, or who are surplus to the requirements of any other port;
- (iv) Shall enter in the live register the names of trawler men transferred to the port from any other port;
- (v) Notwithstanding any determination as to numbers, shall enter in the live register at the port in such capacity as the Port Committee may decide the names of men who, having served in His Majesty's Forces during the present war, have been or are discharged therefrom (otherwise than as the result of a general or partial demobilisation) and who were before such service regularly engaged at that port in trawler fishing and are physically fit therefor;
- (vi) Thereafter shall add to or reduce the number of trawler men on the live register in accordance with directions received from the National Committee, the Regional Committee or the Minister;
- (vii) May set up and maintain a dormant register of persons with experience in trawler fishing who wish to be entered in the live register of the port;
- (viii) Shall transfer from the live register to the dormant register the names of trawler men who are transferred to another port.
- (c) Each Port Committee shall be responsible to the National Committee, the Regional Committee and the Minister for ensuring that the Port Trawler Owners' Association carry out their duties under the scheme;
- (d) Each Port Committee shall observe any directions regarding the administration of the scheme as may from time to time be given to it by the National Committee, the Regional Committee or the Minister.

5. DUTIES OF PORT TRAWLER OWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

The Port Trawler Owners' Association in each port shall -

- (a) Be responsible for the control of trawler men in the reserve pool in the employment of the Association, and their allocation to work in accordance with the provisions of the scheme, but subject to any directions given by the Port Committee;
- (b) Arrange for the transfer of trawler men to other ports, whether within the region to which the scheme applies or to ports outside that region, as directed by the Regional Committee;
- (c) In allocating trawler men to trawler owners use every endeavour to ensure that men best suited to the work of a particular trawler owner are supplied, especially in the case of skippers and mates;

- (d) Collect from every trawler owner in the port a levy at such national rate as the National Committee may from time to time determine, calculated on the gross amount realised by the sale of fish landed from British trawlers, registered under the scheme at the port owned, managed or operated by the trawler owner.
- (e) Pay to each man in its employment in the reserve pool such sums as may be due to him on Friday in each week or on the termination of his employment by the Association in the reserve pool;
- (f) Pay the employers contribution in respect of National Health and Unemployment Insurance contributions due in respect of each trawler man in its employment in the reserve pool and stamp the books or cards;
- (g) insure and keep insured all trawler men in its employment in the reserve pool in respect of liability under the Workmen's Compensation Acts and Employers' Liability Act (and at Common Law);
- (h) Pay such sums for administrative expenses of the Regional Committee and the Port Committee as may from time to time be approved by the National Committee;
- (i) From time to time, and at such times as may be required by the National Committee, furnish to the British Trawlers' Federation Limited, for the National Committee a statement of all monies received and paid under paragraphs (d), (e), (f), (g) and (h) above in such form as the National Committee may direct, and remit (therewith) to the Central Fund held by the said Federation and operated by the National Committee any excess of the receipts over the expenditure covered by the period in respect of which the statement is furnished, and in the event of the expenditure exceeding the receipts, receive from the Central Pool the amount of such excess after the approval and audit of the statement;
- (j) Pay the travelling allowances and fares of men transferred to other Ports for work, in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme.

6. DUTIES OF TRAWLER OWNERS.

- (a) Each Trawler Owner shall be included in the scheme and shall enter into a contract with the Port Trawler Owners' Association of any port in which he is registered under the scheme to observe the conditions of the scheme, and to make such payments to the Port Trawler Owners' Association for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the scheme as may from time to time be required;
- (b) Each trawler owner shall furnish to the Port Committee the names of all British trawlers owned, managed or operated by him at the port, and shall, if so required by the Port Committee, produce the official papers in connexion with any such trawler;
- (c) A trawler owner shall not employ on a British trawler any person other than a trawler man who has been supplied to him by the Port Trawler Owners' Association at the port at which the trawler is registered under the scheme, except that where it is necessary in a case of emergency to complete a crew of a British trawler, and a trawler man cannot be so obtained, a trawler man who is registered at another port, or a person who is not a trawler man, may be employed until the return of the trawler to the port at which that trawler is registered under the scheme, and immediately upon such return, the employment of the person so employed shall be terminated;
- (d) A trawler owner shall not retain any trawler man in his employment on shore for a period of more than seven days after the completion of a voyage without the consent of the Port Committee of the Port at which the trawler man is registered under the scheme (which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld);

- (e) - Each trawler owner shall keep such records as the Port Trawler Owners' Association or the Minister may direct, and produce to such persons as may be designated by the Association or the Minister all records, vouchers and other documents of any kind relating to any operation for which he employs a trawler man, and furnish such information relating thereto as may be required.

7. DUTIES OF TRAWLER MEN.

- (a) Every trawler man whose name is entered in the live register shall be deemed to have accepted the obligations of the scheme;
- (b) Every trawler man in the employment of a trawler owner on the date on which this scheme comes into operation shall be deemed to have been allocated to that owner by the Port Trawler Owners' Association;
- (c) A trawler man shall not engage himself for employment by a trawler owner unless he is allocated to that owner by the Port Trawler Owners' Association;
- (d) A trawler man in the reserve pool in the employment of the Port Trawler Owners' Association shall carry out the directions given to him by the Association with the approval of the Port Committee and, in particular, shall:-
- (i) Report as and when directed to the office of the Port Trawler Owners' Association;
 - (ii) Accept any employment on board a British trawler which the Port Committee considers suitable in his case;
 - (iii) Accept any other employment for which he is considered suitable by the Port Committee, or attend any course of instruction as required by the Committee. If any question arises under this sub-paragraph as to whether any particular employment is suitable, that question shall be decided by the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office in the port;
 - (iv) Travel to other ports for any employment, or training under sub-paragraphs (ii) and (iii) hereof as directed.

8. RATES OF PAY AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

- (a) A trawler man whilst in employment with a trawler owner shall be paid in accordance with the terms of the National Trawling Agreement of the 27th day of May, 1943 and/or, of any local agreement;
- (b) Subject to the provisions of clause 10 of the scheme, a trawler man in the reserve pool in the employment of a Port Trawler Owners' Association and (capable of and) available for work (and willing to accept any employment or undergo any training referred to in clause 7(d)(ii) and (iii) of the scheme) shall be paid such sums as the National Committee may from time to time determine;
- (c) (i) For each twelve months commencing 14th April, 1945 each trawler man included in the scheme shall be entitled to an annual holiday with pay for such period, at such rates and under such conditions as may be determined by the National Committee, provided that the conditions shall not enable any holiday to be commuted for a money payment except with the permission of the Port Committee where otherwise exceptional hardship would be caused to the trawler man or his family;

- (ii) Save as may otherwise be provided by the National Committee, the payment for holiday with pay shall be made by the Port Trawler Owners' Association of the port at which the trawler man is registered under the scheme at the time when the holiday is taken, and shall be recoverable by the Association from the trawler owners for whom the trawler man has worked during the twelve months proportionately in accordance with the length of employment with each of those trawler owners;
- (d) Each trawler man when employed in work under the provisions of clause 7(d)(iii) of the scheme shall be paid at the rate appropriate for that work or at the rate payable under the provisions of sub-paragraph (b) of this paragraph whichever is the greater;
- (e) Each trawler man when transferred for work in any other port shall receive from The Port Employers' Association such amount for travelling expenses and subsistence allowance as may be determined by the National Committee.

9. TEMPORARY RELEASE FROM THE RESERVE POOL.

The Port Committee may remove from the live register for any specified period the name of any trawler man, and place it in the dormant register -

- (a) If the Committee is satisfied as the result of medical evidence that he is unable temporarily through illness or other physical or mental infirmity to accept work as trawler man; or
- (b) For domestic or personal reasons; or
- (c) For employment outside the provisions of the scheme (including herring fishing) if the trawler man is temporarily surplus to requirements;

and may from time to time extend any period and, on the termination of any such period or extended period, shall transfer the name of the trawler man from the dormant register to the live register.

10. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE.

- (a) A trawler man whilst in the reserve pool in the employment of a Port Trawler Owners' Association who fails to comply with the provisions of Clause 7(d) of the scheme, or who fails to comply with any lawful and reasonable orders given to him by or on behalf of the Port Trawler Owners' Association (unless in either case he has reasonable excuse) shall, without prejudice to any other proceedings that may be taken with respect to that failure, be liable to pay to the Association such sum not exceeding 40/- as the Port Committee for the port thinks fit.
- (b) A trawler man whilst in employment to which he has been allocated by the Port Trawler Owners' Association who behaves in such a manner as to impede the work, or fails to comply with any lawful and reasonable orders given to him, may be returned by his employer to the reserve pool. The Port Committee, after hearing such explanation as the trawler man may wish to offer, may, if it so thinks fit, direct the Port Trawler Owners' Association to suspend the man without pay or to dismiss him.
- (c) A trawler man in the reserve pool in the employment of the Port Trawler Owners' Association who is suspended without pay under the provisions of paragraph (b) hereof may within three days of the beginning of the period of suspension request a national service officer in writing to submit the question of suspension to a Local Appeal Board, and if
 - (a) The Board is unanimously of opinion that the suspension was not justified, or was only justified as to a part thereof, or
 - (b) If the Board is not unanimous, a national service officer is of opinion that the suspension was not justified, or was only justified as to a part thereof;
 the suspension, or as the case may be the part thereof, shall be treated as ineffective, and the trawler man shall not be disentitled to the payment set out in clause 8(b) by reason of the suspension or part thereof.

- (d) (i) A trawler man who has been dismissed under the provisions of paragraph (b) hereof may, within three days of the date of such dismissal or within such further period as a national service officer may for good cause in any particular case allow, request in writing a national service officer to submit the matter to a Local Appeal Board;
- (ii) A national service officer shall, on being so requested, forthwith submit the matter to the Board, and the Board shall make such recommendation to a national service officer as it thinks fit, so far as is practicable within seven days of the matter being submitted to it;
- (iii) A national service officer after considering any such recommendation as aforesaid may direct the Port Trawler Owners' Association to reinstate the trawler man who has been so dismissed if the Board is of opinion that the dismissal was not justified on that ground;
- (iv) The dismissal of a trawler man under the foregoing provisions of this clause shall, in the first instance, be provisional only, and if within the period allowed by sub-paragraph (i) hereof, he requires a national service officer to submit the matter to a Local Appeal Board, and a national service officer directs the reinstatement of the trawler man under sub-paragraph (iii) hereof, the dismissal shall be treated as ineffective; but if the trawler man fails to require the matter to be submitted as aforesaid within the time so allowed, or a national service officer notifies him and the Port Trawler Owners' Association that he does not intend to direct his reinstatement, the dismissal shall be treated as having been always operative;
- (v) Where the dismissal of a trawler man is treated as having been ineffective, the provisions of Clause 8(b) of the Scheme shall have effect in respect of any period elapsing after the dismissal until the reinstatement takes place, and a trawler man shall not for the purposes of the said Clause be treated as not having been capable of and available for work and, willing to accept any employment, or undergo any training to which Clause 7(d)(ii) or (iii) applies by reason of his attendance at the hearing of his case by a Local Appeal Board, or by reason of his having taken other employment, but in the latter case any sums earned by him in that other employment shall be deducted from any sum to which he may be entitled in respect of the said period under the said Clause 8(b).
- (e) Without prejudice to any proceedings that may be taken, a trawler owner who fails to carry out the conditions of the Scheme or to make any payment which under the scheme he is required to make may be given seven days' notice in writing by the Port Committee of its intention to remove his name from the register kept under the Scheme.

A trawler owner may within seven days of the receipt of that notice appeal in writing to the National Committee, and the finding of the National Committee shall be final unless within seven days of the notification to him of that decision (or within such further time as the Minister may for good cause in any particular case allow) he appeals in writing to the Minister, and the decision of the Minister shall be final.

11. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT.

- (a) A Port Trawler Owners' Association shall not terminate the employment by it of any trawler man in the reserve pool except -
- (i) By summary dismissal in case of serious misconduct while in the reserve pool, or while in employment to which he has been allocated, and in that case the provisions relating to appeal contained in clause 10(d) shall apply; or
 - (ii) By giving seven days' notice in writing, and by obtaining the permission of a national service officer; or
 - (iii) So as to enable the trawler man to be employed in accordance with the scheme.
- (b) A trawler man shall not leave his employment with the Port Trawler Owners' Association except by giving seven days' notice in writing and by obtaining the permission of a national service officer, or except so as to be employed in accordance with the Scheme.
- (c) (i) A Port Trawler Owners' Association or a trawler man aggrieved by reason of the fact that a national service officer has given or refused his permission under the foregoing provisions of this clause may, within three days of such permission or refusal or within such further period as the national service officer may for good cause in any particular case allow, request in writing a national service officer to refer the matter to a Local Appeal Board;
- (ii) A national service officer shall, on being so requested, forthwith submit the matter to the Board, and the Board shall make such recommendation to a national service officer as it thinks fit, so far as is practicable within seven days of the matter being submitted to it;
- (iii) A national service officer after considering any such recommendation as aforesaid may cancel any permission already given, or give or refuse any permission, or direct a trawler man who has left his employment with the Port Trawler Owners' Association to return to it, or direct the Port Trawler Owners' Association to reinstate a trawler man whose employment has been terminated under a permission that has been cancelled.

12. REINSTATEMENT IN CIVIL EMPLOYMENT ACT.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS IN CASES OF REINSTATEMENT.

- (a) Where the Port Trawler Owners' Association as the former employer has reinstated in its employment a person who was before the beginning of his war service last employed at the port in trawler fishing, that person on being so reinstated shall be deemed to be a trawler man, and any necessary entry in the live register shall be made or treated as having been made accordingly.
- (b) Where the Port Trawler Owners' Association as the former employer has reinstated a person in the circumstances set out in paragraph (a) hereof, then in respect of that person for a period of twenty-six weeks, or in the circumstances set out in the proviso to sub-section (1) of section four of the Act fifty-two weeks, after he is so reinstated, the provisions of the Scheme which provide for an appeal in connection with the termination by the Association of that person's employment, or the dismissal of that person for serious misconduct, shall not apply.

- (c) In this clause, the following expressions have the meanings hereby assigned to them:-

"The Act" means the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, 1944;

"Former employer", "war service", and "the beginning of his war service" have respectively the meanings assigned to them in the Act;

"Re-instated" means taken into the employment of the Port Trawler Owners' Association in pursuance of an application for re-instatement under section one of the Act, or in such circumstances that such application has been waived or dispensed with.

13. DEFINITIONS.

For the purpose of this Scheme, the following expressions have the meanings hereby assigned to them:-

"British trawler" means a fishing boat which is registered under the Scheme, being a trawler of 50 tons tonnage and upwards, which is entered in the Fishing Boat Register under the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1940, and ordinarily operates from a port to which the Scheme applies and is wholly or mainly employed in sea fishing with trawl nets or pareja nets or with lines;

"Local Appeal Board" means a Local Appeal Board constituted by the Minister in accordance with the provisions of Article 5 of the Essential Work (General Provisions) (No.2) Order, 1942, so, however, that where in any case it appears to the Chairman of a Local Appeal Board that, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, undue delay would be caused by summoning a Local Appeal Board as aforesaid, the Chairman shall for the purpose of that case be deemed to constitute a Local Appeal Board;

"The Minister" means the Minister of Labour and National Service;

"National Committee" means the Trawler Fishermen National Pool Committee constituted by associations representing respectively persons carrying on undertakings engaged in trawler fishing and persons employed in such undertakings;

"Port Trawler Owners' Association" means the association or body of persons (whether incorporated or not), established for or existing in a port with power to employ trawler men registered at that port during such times as they are not employed by a trawler owner, which such employment is for establishing a reserve pool of labour for trawler fishing; provided that where in any port there is only one trawler owner that trawler owner shall, for the purposes of the Order and the Scheme, be the Port Trawler Owners' Association, and "Order" means the Essential Work (Trawler Fishing) Order, 1943;

"Trawler man" means a person who is registered in the live register kept in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme;

"Trawler owner" means a person who owns, manages or operates a British trawler, who is registered in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme.

APPENDIX 8

'The Fisherman's Charter', T & GWU,
May, 1968.

“ THE FISHERMAN’S CHARTER ”

1. **Legal Minimum of 12 hours rest in any period of 24 hours from the start of fishing operations.**
2. **Longer Legal Minimum Rest Periods between Trips**
Regulations to provide for a minimum of two days on shore for every five days at sea, irrespective of agreed annual holidays, with a minimum period of six days ashore between trips. Payable at average earnings.
3. **Reform of Methods of Remuneration**
“ Merchant Navy ” conditions of a 40-hour week, with overtime and weekend pay. Incentive element to be based on tonnage caught and not on value of catch sold.
4. **Greater Pay and Job Security for Skippers**
Skipper to be paid an annual salary, plus bonus, with contract of employment for two years and right of independent appeal if dismissed or refused permission to transfer.
5. **A Registration Scheme—and Decasualisation**
Jointly controlled Registration Scheme, through which entry and discipline would be regulated. Only Registered men allowed to sign on or sail; this to be the basis of a decasualisation scheme.
6. **Training**
Jointly controlled training scheme providing for a compulsory 8-week training course for new entrants, and a one week intensive course for all fishermen who are not already Qualified Deck Hands.
7. **Minimum Age of Entry—17 years old**
For distant water trawlers, no boy to sail under 17 years of age. Boys under that age to be engaged, possibly, on near or middle water fishing, and in training.
8. **Establishment of Crew’s Representative on all Ships**
Whilst any unsettled problems could be referred to end of trip, Crew’s Representative would have right to raise safety matters with the Skipper and would have access to wind gauge and other instruments in operating a proposed ban on fishing in Force 8 gale, or above.
9. **Shore Safety Committee**
With equal union/employer representation and Board of Trade Inspector as Chairman or associated with the Committee. Authority to refuse permission to sail after pre-sailing inspection, inspect ship on return from trip, and to supervise safety training.
10. **Safety Equipment, Methods of Working**
Full list of over twenty proposals submitted, including inflatable life-rafts, lighter lifejackets, compulsory weather calculators, safer methods of trawling, more effective inspectors, better “ de-icing ” methods and medical attention and compulsory radio operators.
11. **“ Mother ” Ship**
Implementation of “ Mother ” ship, possibly also associated with factory ship operation and fleeting. Proposed that Inquiry makes full information available on this question.
12. **Provision of Protective Clothing, Bedding, and Essential Tools**
Adequate protection against both water and cold is essential to health of fishermen, and to assist in guarding against accidents with tools and equipment. Essential tools, bedding and protective clothing to be supplied. Latter to be regarded as including rubbers, wool guernseys, trousers and boot hose—warmth is an essential part of safety at sea.

T & GWU Policy Statement on Decasualisation
of the Fishing Industry, November, 1975.

PROPOSAL

TGWU POLICY STATEMENT ON
THE DECASUALISATION OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY.

SUBSECTION 1INTRODUCTION AND POLICY STATEMENTS

- 1.1 The British trawling industry in 1975 is experiencing a multiple crisis of unprecedented magnitude, in which the whole future of the industry is in question. The cumulative effects of uncertainties over fishing limits in international waters, the entry of Britain into the EEC, the cost increases occasioned by the inflation of fuel prices and other items, and the decline in the domestic market price of fish during the first half of 1975, have produced consequences too well known - at least in terms of the decline in the fishing fleet and laying-up of vessels, - to need elaborate documentation. The Government's response has been to provide a simple and indiscriminate operational subsidy at an estimated cost for the first six months of 1975 of £6½ million. This has not stopped the loss of vessels from the fleet, which has actually accelerated during that period.
- 1.2 The British Trawler Federation has ensured that the economic plight of the industry has received publicity. The TGWU has supported the campaign to draw public attention to the crisis. But our efforts to publicise its effects upon the industry's work-force have been treated with relative indifference and neglect.
- 1.3 It is significant that when industries such as mining and railways have been forced to reduce their size and labour force, substantial attention has been given to manpower planning, to the negotiation of redeployment arrangements within the industries, and to the provision of severance payments over and above the statutory requirements of the Redundancy Payments Act. An industry such as port transport, whilst not publicly owned, is covered by a statutory Labour Scheme which ensures that the reduction of manpower occasioned by technological and economic change is carried out on a voluntary basis, with proper safeguards against indiscriminate sackings, and with voluntary severance payments to those workers who accept redundancy. The contrast between the situation of workers in these industries and in trawling could not be more severe. Fishermen enjoy neither the protection of the Contracts of Employment Act and the Redundancy Payments Act, nor the special statutory protection afforded to previously casual employment such as obtains in the docks industry.

1.4 This contrast is further high-lighted by the almost complete neglect of the need to compile even the most rudimentary information about the work-force in the trawling industry. A research-worker or a trade union requiring information on employment, unemployment, and earnings in almost any major industry in the U.K. is able to use at least some sources such as the Department of Employment, the major companies in the industry, or statutory bodies such as the National Dock Labour Board, with some confidence in their accuracy. By contrast, almost nothing is known in adequate detail or from any reliable source about the trawlermen's situation.

1.5 In 1969 the Holland-Martin Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety recorded that "it is difficult to obtain reliable statistics on stability of employment and labour turnover in the fishing industry, since the relevant figures are not collected by the Department of Employment and Productivity as they are for manufacturing industry" (1) Six years later, in 1975, the White Fish Authority, the only statutory body with industry-wide responsibilities in trawling, reported that:

"A study - Employment in the Fishing Industry of Great Britain - was initiated to collate the data available on the number of people whose livelihood depended on the continuing prosperity of the British fishing industry. Definitive, official information available in this respect proved to be somewhat limited and the process of augmenting it was, with the limited resources available, arduous and lengthy". (2)

1.6 The absence of elementary welfare state protection for fishermen as employees, and of adequate information about their numbers and conditions, are twin symptoms of the fundamentally casual and backward state of employment relations in this industry. The situation, now compounded by the traumatic economic experience through which the industry is passing, calls for a major act of social reform directed to the decasualisation of employment in fishing, together with the extension of public control and eventually of ownership of the industry. Industrial relations in fishing remains - along with the casual sub-contract system in building, the sweat-shop conditions in some Wages Council industries, the tied-cottage situation in agriculture, - as one of the outstanding items on the agenda of labour relations reform, attention to which is long over-due.

1.7 The Transport & General Workers' Union, as the principal organisation representing wage-earning fishermen, has the responsibility and obligation, on behalf of its members, to initiate a campaign and serious policy discussions and decisions, in this field. Despite all the acknowledged difficulties of organising trade union membership in trawling, the Union's status as the representative of the interests of fishermen is not in dispute. The TGU has responded positively to the criticism, expressed by some crew members to the Holland-Martin Committee, that it had "taken an insufficiently informed interest in the problems of the fishing industry in the past." (3). Since that opinion was expressed in 1969, the Union has increased the resources devoted to its membership in fishing, and has participated fully in all those activities stemming from the Holland-Martin recommendations for the improvement of employment relationships, safety, and standards of life of its fishing membership. It has, for example, achieved some gains in seeking to standardise, across the industry, the practice of Joint Discipline Committees, and of registration schemes, in the fishing ports.

1.8 Inevitably, given the absence of effective statistics, the Union is unable to offer precise claims on the ratio of members to labour-force. We have a 100 per cent membership agreement in the port of Aberdeen, and Union contributions are deducted at source in a number of major ports. We have 900 members in the port of Hull out of 1200 practicing fishermen and 200 out of the 800 fishermen regularly employed in the trawling industry in Grimsby. (This represents a temporary set-back from the position in that port a few years ago, when we had 800 members out of a labour-force of about 1200.) In addition to these ports, full-time Union officials with fishing industry duties exist for the ports of Fleetwood, North Shields, Lowestoft, etc. Preference in employment is given, under the registration schemes existing at major fishing ports, to Union members.

1.9 In short, the Union can properly claim a unique representative status on behalf of fishermen employed by the trawler companies. The fact that membership is less than 100 per cent across the industry as a whole is due principally to the casual nature of employment. The Union's existing membership, together with the recognition and negotiating rights which it

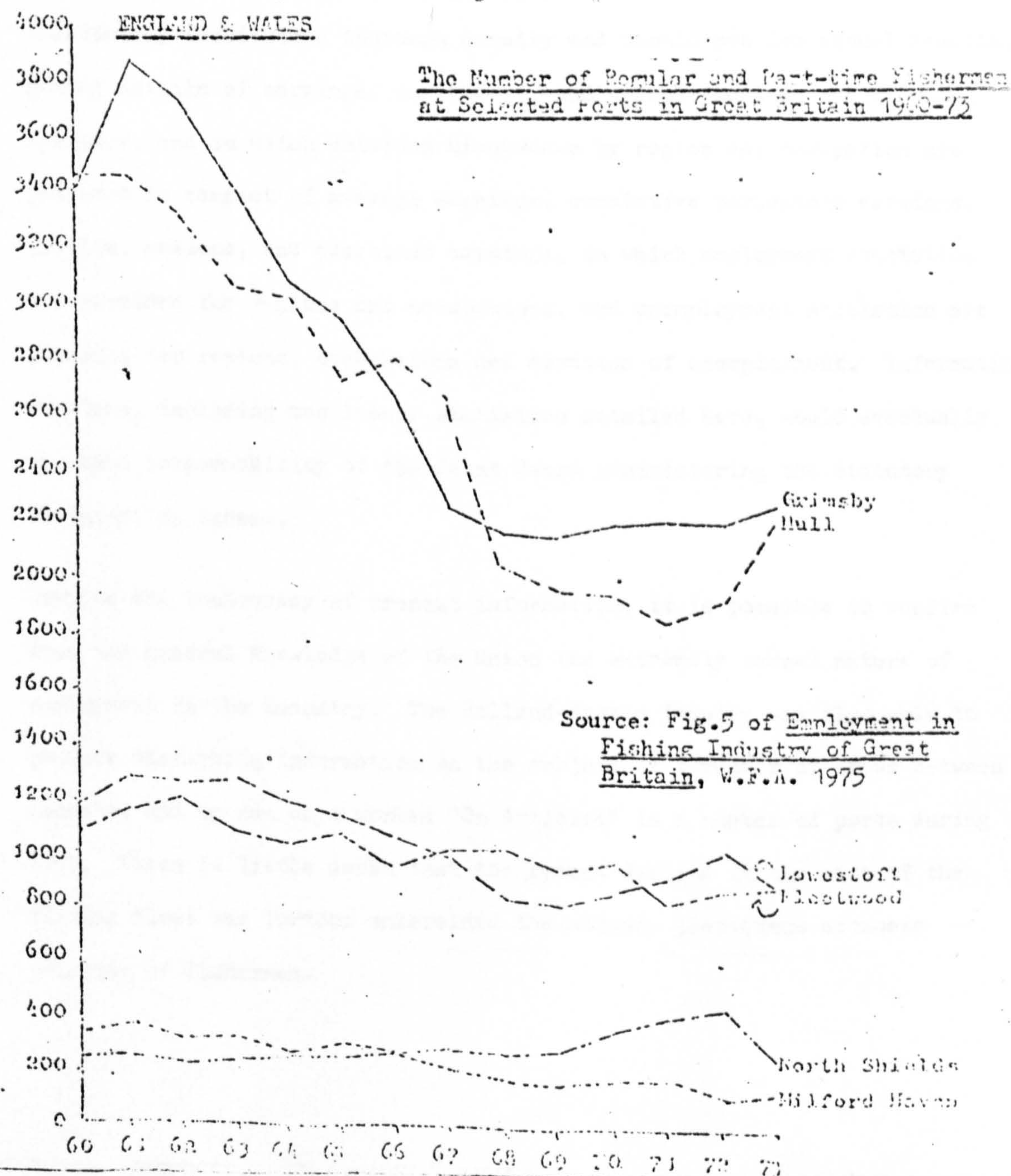
has won in all the major fishing ports is a legitimate basis from which to present the claims embodied in this document for an advance of trade union representation, which claims are consistent with the policy of the TGWU and the TUC in industry as a whole.

1.10 In summary form, the Union's policy objectives include:

- (i) The establishment of a Statutory Registration Scheme, administered by a national and port authorities on which the Union and the trawler owners would have equal representation, and under which the size of the registered labour force was jointly determined
- (ii) the acceptance within the terms of the Registration Scheme that only registered fishermen could be employed, and only registered employers could operate, from the fishing ports covered by the scheme
- (iii) a provision within the Scheme that all crew members would over a transitional period, be engaged on a permanent basis by the trawler companies operating under the scheme, and that crew members without such a contract for the time being would during periods of unemployment, receive a fall-back wage closely related to average earnings
- (iv) that pending the implementation of the proposed statutory Registration Scheme, the fishermen covered by the existing negotiated port registration schemes should be covered by the Contracts of Employment Act 1963 and the Redundancy Payments Scheme 1965
- (v) that the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 should be fully implemented in respect of the trawler industry
- (vi) that 100 per cent Union membership Agreements should be concluded with the trawler companies
- (vii) that the trawler companies and their ancillary fish-processing activities should be brought under public ownership at the earliest possible date, and administered by an authority having 50 per cent workers' representation to be determined by trade union-controlled elections
- (viii) that all outstanding recommendations of the Holland-Martin Inquiry should be implemented without delay

SECTION 11THE CURRENT STATE OF THE INDUSTRYThe Labour Force

- 2.1 We have already drawn attention to the lack of detailed evidence on earnings, employment and unemployment in the industry. The most systematic study attempted to date is that published by the White Fish Authority in February 1975, Employment in the Fishing Industry of Great Britain. Whilst this report is rightly cautious about drawing conclusions from its figures, since the bases of the statistics are often shifting and unreliable, certain general trends do emerge. For example in the graph below, it is evident that a long-term decline in the number of regular and part-time fishermen in the two major fishing ports of Hull and Grimsby is in process. The up-turn in the graphs for 1973 is known to have been short-lived, and to have been followed by the recession through which these ports are living at the present time.



- 2.2 The number of Regularly and Partially Employed Fishermen in Great Britain as a whole have declined as follows:

	<u>Regularly Employed</u>	<u>Partially Employed</u>
1960	21,507	6,097
1972	17,813	4,166

Source : Table 1 of Employment in the Fishing Industry of Great Britain, W.S.A. 1975

- 2.3 The percentage of unemployed fishermen in relation to the number of regularly employed fishermen has fluctuated over the period 1961-73 from between 8.2% and 12.0%. By any standards, this is an intolerably high rate of unemployment, which occurs against the background of steady overall decline of numbers indicated above. The seasonal and year-by-year fluctuations in unemployment rates are of course also notoriously severe. But much more needs to be known about the situation.
- 2.4 We propose that the Department of Employment and Productivity should immediately institute a thorough enquiry and should publish annual results, giving details of earnings, employment, and unemployment in the trawling industry, and in which detailed break-down by region and occupation are provided in respect of average earnings, cumulative percentage earnings, deciles, medians, and quartiles earnings, in which employment statistics are provided for regions and occupations, and unemployment statistics are provided for regions, occupations and duration of unemployment. Information services, including the labour statistics detailed here, would eventually become a responsibility of the Joint Board administering the statutory Registration Scheme.
- 2.5 Despite the inadequacy of present information, it is possible to confirm from the general knowledge of the Union the extremely casual nature of employment in the industry. The Holland-Martin Inquiry was also able to produce disturbing information on the subject of turnover of crews between vessels, and on man days worked "On Articles" in a number of ports during 1967. There is little doubt that the recent decline in the size of the fishing fleet has further undermined the already precarious economic security of fishermen.

TABLE 1

Proportionate Distribution of Man-Days Worked by Trawlersmen in
Different Ranges of Days 'On Articles' in Four Ports, 1967

Port	Range of Days on Articles									Total %	
	Under 51 %	51- 100 %	101- 150 %	151- 200 %	201- 250 %	251- 300 %	301- 350 %	Over 350 %			
Fleetwood	0.8	2.9	5.0	7.2	11.4	22.6	40.7	9.4	100		
Grimsby	19.7	11.8	8.4	9.0	10.7	16.0	21.0	5.4	100		
Hull	1.6	2.6	5.5	8.7	17.3	31.0	28.0	5.1	100		
Lowestoft	Under 30	30- 69	70- 109	110- 149	150- 189	190- 229	230- 269	270- 309	310- 349	350 and over	Total %
	1.7	4.5	5.1	5.5	6.3	6.9	7.2	9.1	23.2	30.4	100

Note: Information is not available on the numbers of trawlersmen in Fleetwood who worked for less than 30 days on articles.

Source: British Trawlers' Federation Ltd.

in Trawler Safety: The Holland-Martin
Report, Cmd. 4114, H.M.S.O 1969, Page 77

TABLE 2

Frequency with which the Different Categories of Trawlersmen changed vessels in Hull, 1967

Category	No. of Changes																Total	%
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12					
	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %		
	28 30	29 31	20 22	3 9	6 7	1 1	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	92 100		
	19 23	27 32	14 17	16 19	8 9	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	84 100		
	16 20	28 36	17 22	12 15	2 3	3 4	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	78 100		
	10 11	12 13	20 22	19 20	14 15	10 11	5 5	2 2	1 1	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	93 100		
engineer	74 65	19 17	11 10	5 4	2 2	1 1	1 1	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	113 100		
engineer	43 34	37 29	11 9	15 12	14 11	3 2	2 2	1 1	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	126 100		
oiler/greaser	79 45	33 19	25 14	17 10	13 7	4 2	3 2	— —	— —	1 1	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	175 100		
ber	3 2	18 15	18 15	24 20	18 15	13 10	17 14	5 4	3 2	2 2	1 1	— —	— —	— —	— —	123 100		
assistant	1 5	3 14	1 5	3 14	1 5	8 38	4 19	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	21 100		
land and land	136 16	129 15	146 17	160 19	125 15	84 10	32 4	25 3	14 2	5 —	— —	— —	1 —	— —	— —	557 100		
	409 23	335 19	283 16	279 16	203 12	127 7	64 4	33 2	18 1	8 —	1 —	— —	1 —	— —	— —	1761 100		

This table embraces regularly employed fishermen only who are defined as fishermen who have completed either 12 trips or 240 days on articles.
Source: British Trawlers' Federation Ltd.

in Trawler Safety: on cit. Page 80

- 2.6 Attention has recently been focussed by the Fishing Industry Working Group upon the problems of discipline, and notably the problem of drinking, in the industry. The Union's considered view is that, whilst efforts to improve discipline and sobriety will continue to receive its support, and the system of Joint Discipline Committees in the fishing ports should be sustained pending the removal of any last vestige of the authority of the Merchant Shipping Act in the industry, and pending the assumption by the proposed statutory Joint Board of disciplinary functions, the problems of discipline are only rightly to be understood against the back-ground of the casual nature of fishermen's employment.
- 2.7 In this matter, trawlermen are living through a difficult transitional process. Formerly, the extremes of their casual, dangerous and often brutal employment situation were offset in part by the existence of tightly knit fishing communities in the port areas, which provided some self-help and inwardly protective self-respect. With the break-up of old housing areas near the fish-docks, this mutual aid and comfort has been removed, but the employment relationship has not fundamentally altered. If trawling is ever to become a mature and self respecting occupation, it must be provided with all the statutory, social and trade union protections which exist in other industries. The search, fostered by trawler-owners and encouraged (by lack of initiative) by Governments, for some kind of half-way house such as the inadequate registration schemes at present operating in a number of ports, will only prolong the transition stage.
- 2.8 The principal labour problem is the lack of a normal employment relationship.
The labour force must be stabilised and given security of earnings and employment, from which steps will follow a new and higher occupational status for fishermen, and an end to such special problems as alcohol addiction amongst a minority of fishermen.
- 2.9 The Size of the Industry
Unlike the situation on the labour side of the industry, the evidence for the size of the trawling vessel fleet is well documented. It shows that, with the exception of Freezer and Factory Trawlers, the industry has been in decline for many years. From 184 distant water trawlers in 1965, the

total has fallen to 115 in 1974. From 421 middle and near water trawlers in 1965, the total has fallen to 291 in 1974. Freezers and factory ships increased from 12 in 1965 to 48 in 1974; although this is a welcome development, it by no means offset the fall in employment opportunities caused by the dramatic decline of the wet fish trawlers.

TABLE 3

Distant water trawlers registered at 31st December

Year	England and Wales		Scotland		Vessels into service in year	Vessels out of service in year
	Wet fish trawlers	Freezer and Factory trawlers	Wet Fish trawlers	Total		
1965	182	12	2	196	8	15
1966	171	25	3	199	23	20
1967	153	27	2	182	4	21
1968	131	32	2	165	14	32
1969	125	34	2	161	3	7
1970	123	36	2	161	4	4
1971	124	37	3	164	4	1
1972	123	41	4	168	10	6
1973	118	46	4	168	10	10
1974	111	48	4	163	6	11

Source: Fisheries Departments' statistics

TABLE 4

Near and middle water trawlers and liners at 31st December

Year	England and Wales	Scotland	Total	Vessels into service in year	Vessels out of service in year
1965	291	130	421	10	21
1966	282	124	406	4	19
1967	269	126	395	5	16
1968	253	125	378	7	24
1969	244	127	371	7	14
1970	229	122	351	2	22
1971 (a)	205	121	326	12	37
1972 (b)	207	122	329	11	8
1973 (c)	206	120	326	18	21
1974 (d)	180	111	291	19	54

(a) Includes 7 liners and seiners
(c) Includes 6 liners and seiners

(b) Includes 10 liners and seiners
(d) Includes 7 liners and seiners

Source: Fisheries Departments' statistics

Ownership and Control of the Industry

2.10

No detailed account of the process of merger and take-over, which has characterised the trawling industry and its ancillary firms during the past 15 years, is attempted in this document. But the trend towards monopolisation in the ownership of trawlers is well-known to all in the industry, and to government. The industry to-day is dominated by three companies which own between them more than half the fleet of 338 distant, near, and middle water trawlers in England and Wales.

TABLE 5

Ownership of distant, near and middle water trawlers in England and Wales

	December 1973			December 1974		
	Number of owners	Number of vessels	Cumulative percentage of fleet	Number of owners	Number of vessels	Cumulative percentage of fleet
Over 50 vessels	1	111	30	1	111	33
21-50 vessels	3	99	57	2	65	52
11-20 vessels	4	56	72	4	55	68
5-10 vessels	10	68	90	9	64	87
4 vessels	1	4	91	2	8	90
3 vessels	4	12	95	5	15	94
2 vessels	3	6	98	2	4	95
1 vessel	14	14	100	16	16	100
TOTAL	40	370	-	41	338	-

Source : White Fish Authority, Annual Report and Accounts 1974/75, page 23

Five companies between them own 60 per cent of the Scottish fleet.

Associated Fisheries, through British United Trawlers Limited, own major companies in Aberdeen, Fleetwood, Grimsby and Hull. The Boston Fishing Group Holdings Limited operate over a similar network of companies out of most of the major ports. Inter-locking directorships between parent and subsidiary companies further reinforce the control of a small handful of private owners, their families and their representatives. Associated activities in the frozen food trades occupied the attention of the Monopolies Commission in 1975.

The fact that trawler owners should have sought mutual protection through concentration and rationalisation should not cause surprise. It is a common story repeated in every major industry in the country. Few industries however, have pursued this policy with smaller regard for the social and economic consequences to their employees. Furthermore, the owners have used their concentrated authority to press successfully for a whole series of government financial aid schemes, whilst resisting the Unions' demands, reinforced from time to time by public outcry, for fundamental reforms of the employment relationship. The cumulative total of government grants to the industry over the past twenty-five years had reached the impressive sum of £47,553,785 in 1974-75, in addition to which a further £43,236,743 had been provided through special government loans to the industry.

TABLE 6

Cumulative totals of grants and loans for vessels, processing plants and co-operatives

	Gross grants expenditure	Gross loans expenditure	Net loans outstanding
	£	£	£
1953-54	163,719	182,169	177,829
1954-55	799,822	1,315,645	1,222,354
1955-56	1,098,114	3,324,914	3,074,603
1956-57	3,303,594	5,838,926	5,157,043
1957-58	4,508,190	9,433,652	8,022,053
1958-59	5,937,207	13,181,901	10,897,522
1959-60	8,787,843	18,682,815	14,880,850
1960-61	11,273,644	24,594,471	19,441,490
1961-62	12,735,371	28,841,017	22,032,074
1962-63	13,078,816	30,616,372	22,262,133
1963-64	13,267,769	31,306,626	20,695,064
1964-65	13,393,802	31,579,222	18,728,559
1965-66	15,283,112	32,273,621	16,925,300
1966-67	16,640,016	32,630,924	15,053,104
1967-68	18,532,335	32,949,544	13,778,129
1968-69	22,135,168	33,501,423	11,873,171
1969-70	24,184,525	34,220,630	10,484,846
1970-71	26,839,980	35,082,414	9,932,647
1971-72	30,323,876	36,178,879	9,219,584
1972-73	36,370,266	37,885,673	9,339,148
1973-74	43,014,707	40,331,208	9,288,102
1974-75	47,553,785	43,236,743	10,950,083

Source : White Fish Authority, op.cit.
page 25.

It is time that the principal of "no public finance without public accountability" was asserted more vigorously for the case of the trawling industry. The Union's proposal for a fundamental reform in employment relationships is one essential part of this process.

SECTION IIIALTERNATIVE BASES FOR A NEW EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

3.1 The present basis of the employment contract for fishermen continues to rest on Articles of Agreement under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, and not on the Contracts of Employment Act which applies to the vast majority of employees in Britain. The nature of the fishermen's Contract thus directly contributes - as the Holland-Martin Committee argued - to the casual and short-term commitment which trawler-men, and (we would add) also the trawler owners, have towards their jobs (4). Following a recommendation of Holland-Martin, the ad hoc Schemes of Registration of fishermen operating in some ports have become more widespread. These Schemes have some common features. In the case of the Grimsby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association Scheme, the objects of the scheme are to:

- "(i) Create the conditions in which trawl fishermen may enjoy regular employment.
- (ii) Provide an effective means for the efficient utilisation of the fishing labour force.
- (iii) Raise the general efficiency of persons employed in trawl fishing.
- (iv) Encourage the entry of young persons into the fishing industry.
- (v) Introduce a system by means of which skill and experience may be attained and attested.
- (vi) Encourage trawl fishermen to remain in continuous employment."

3.2 These objects are reflected in the Holland-Martin Recommendation that "The Owners and the Union should co-operate in setting up registration schemes in all ports in order to lay down common standards of character, health, fitness and training for new recruits" (5); the Report also called for the "joint control of the schemes by both sides of the industry". In fact, the schemes are not properly speaking jointly controlled, nor do they provide for regular and continuous employment, nor do they ensure that there is any control over the total size of the Register (6). Indeed in the Grimsby case, we find that many of the specifically casual elements in the trawler employment tradition are actually written into the Scheme.

3.3 For example:

1. The Scheme is defined as the Grimby Fishing Vessel Owners' Association Registration Scheme; it cannot therefore be described as a scheme "under joint control".
2. The Fishing Vessel Owners' Association issues the Temporary Record Cards and Port Record Books which are evidence of a man's registration.
3. The Temporary Record Card and Port Record Book can be withdrawn by the Owners' Association at any time.
4. Fishermen "inside and outside the industry" are invited by public advertisement to register and to be issued with a Temporary Record Card or Port Record Book. "No fisherman shall be precluded from registering if they so wish to register".
5. "New entrants to the Port (including bona fide fishermen from other ports) will be issued with a Temporary Record Card."
6. "In the event of no registered trawl fishermen being available for shipment, an Owner or his Agent or the Skipper may take a non-registered fisherman to the Registration Office with the object of having him registered before being shipped on to that Owner's, Agent's or Skipper's vessel. If the said non-registered fisherman agrees to be shipped at a time when the Registration Office is closed and the vessel is sailing before the Registration Office opens, the Owner, Agent, or Skipper may ship the fisherman, complete the signing-on procedure and order the man to sail on the vessel. On the first occasion when the vessel returns to Grimby, the said non-registered fisherman shall be taken to the Registration Office by the Owner, Agent or Skipper so that the fisherman shall be duly registered".

3.4 This last Clause in particular underlines the fact that authority to employ, on a casual basis, all-comers to the industry, remains with the Owners. Moreover, whilst priority of employment is accorded to Union members under the Scheme, there are numerous references to the limitation on this commitment, including a requirement that Union men will not object to sailing with non-Union men and "conscientious objectors".

3.5 The Schemes as at present framed do provide for Medical Checks on registered men, and for the registration of entrants who have been through Training Schemes. They do provide for Disciplinary Suspensions from the Registers, thus affording teeth for the operation of Joint Disciplinary Committees in the ports. The Union participates in these Committees; the only area of joint administration at present existing in most of the Schemes. We have agreed to operate Joint Discipline Committees because they provide a way of superseding the old and discredited method of taking fishermen to Court under the Merchant Shipping Laws. But in the light of the deficiencies - from the Union point of view - in the Schemes as a whole, it is clear that we cannot

accept this limited participation as satisfactory evidence of decasualisation and joint control. The present situation, in which the Registration is carried out by the Vessel Owners, and in which access to Registration Records may not be available to the Union, is not a Joint Scheme, nor a decasualisation Scheme, and represents the "half-way house" solution which we have earlier condemned as fatal to the long-term solution of the fishermen's multiple problems and deprivations.

- 3.6 There are a number of alternative bases for a proper decasualisation scheme which might be explored. The Merchant Service operates its Established Service Scheme under joint control of the British Shipping Federation and the seamen's Unions, and some aspects of that Scheme are worthy of consideration, notably the inclusion of a Redundancy Payments Agreement, a Severance Payments Agreement, and the Closed Shop Agreement for ratings. However, we do not propose that in detail our Scheme for fishermen should follow that of the Merchant Service; the TGWU has a far wider experience and knowledge of other models, and we also wish to confirm the tendency to relate fishermen's conditions to those of shore-based industries, rather than re-inforce the links with the past, including the Merchant Shipping Acts. We have indeed welcomed the trend apparent in the Merchant Shipping Act of 1970 to remove fishermen from the legal penalties enforceable against sea-farers under the Merchant Shipping Laws.
- 3.7 We have also participated as a Union in the framing of proposals for the decasualisation of employment in the Construction Industry. The TGWU submitted a substantial document to the Phelps-Brown Committee on The Engagement and Use of Labour in Construction. A number of important general principles have been enunciated by the Trade Unions in connection with that Industry, upon which we draw in discussing the fishing industry. However, the specific problems of that industry make it unsuitable as a detailed model from which to approach the trawlermen's needs.
- 3.8 The TGWU has derived most experience and insight into the benefits of labour registration schemes and decasualisation through its long association with the Dock Labour Scheme. This has provided security of employment for a key group of workers who were previously hired and fired by the half-day

in the most primitively casual system. Decasualisation was achieved in the docks industry in two stages. In the first, initiated during the war and consolidated in 1947, a registration scheme was established which was administered by the Dock Labour Boards at national and port level. These Boards are composed of 50 per cent representation from the two sides of the Industry. The Board allocated registered dockers to individual dock companies for short periods, at the end of which the men returned to a pool, and were maintained on a fall-back rate of pay financed by a levy on the registered employers. Some dockers obtained more regular contracts with individual companies, but most were "pool" men.

3.9 This half-way house system was superseded by full decasualisation under the Devlin reforms of 1967 under which all dockers were eventually allocated to company employment on a permanent basis. However, Devlin found that it was still necessary to retain the registration scheme, and the Dock Labour Boards to administer the register and continue with welfare and discipline functions. This was because of the still seasonal and fluctuating nature of port work, which requires that men be transferable temporarily between employers. These features of the industry are comparable with those in trawling, and this is our reason for advancing a similar scheme for fishing industry decasualisation.

3.10 There is a great deal of misunderstanding about labour relations in the docks industry; the Union's experience indicates very clearly that the security of employment enjoyed by the individual docker has facilitated the introduction of modern methods of cargo-handling to a very considerable degree. There is no doubt that productivity in cargo-handling rose very sharply following the introduction of the Devlin reforms and full decasualisation after 1967. Port workers are now very conscious of their stake in the industry and are prepared to examine advanced ideas about how they can contribute to the management and prosperity of the industry.

3.11 Fishermen to-day have little or no stake in their industry; the precarious and casual relationship which they have both with the individual company and the industry as a whole is a severe discouragement to the development of any such commitment. The Union, through the programme of

decasualisation advanced here, is consciously striving to increase the influence of fishermen, not only in the interests of the individual trawlerman's security, but also so that through his Union, he may discover and contribute to a much wider role for his industry in the national and international economy. Fishing has suffered from a short-term exploitative attitude not only towards its employees, but towards the source of its wealth, namely the fish stocks of the oceans. Modern, progressive Trade Unionism has undoubtedly much to contribute to industrial policy-making in addition to its primary role of representing the economic and social needs of the present generation of its members.

- 3.12 We want to contribute in this wider field in the fishing industry. We cannot possibly adopt such a role, or be expected to do so, whilst at the same time we are kept at arms' length from the decision-making processes in the industry, and whilst our fishing membership is subject to an inferior status which our members in other industries are successfully transcending in favour of new, more democratic and responsible roles.
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SECTION IVTHE PROPOSED REGISTRATION SCHEME

4.1 This document does not attempt to define with legal precision, the fine details of the legislation required to enact the decasualisation of employment in fishing. Much discussion will be required, following what we hope will be a ready acceptance of these policy proposals by Government and trawler owners. What follows is therefore a general outline of our proposals, with indications of areas where further definition is still needed.

4.2 The Structure

We propose the establishment of a statutory National Labour Board for Fishing, (NLBF) comprising equal numbers of representatives from the trawler owners' organisations and from Unions representing the wage-earning categories of trawler crews on near, middle and distant water trawlers. (It ought to be possible to devise a structure in which separate committees of the Board dealt with crew members as defined above, and with Skippers and Mates, since all categories of fishermen, including the latter, face problems of insecurity. We refrain however, from proposing the incorporation of Skippers, since we do not claim to represent them). There should be a National Board, and also local or port Boards, similarly constituted, which would be responsible for administering the Scheme in the localities.

4.3 The Functions of the Boards

These should include:

- (1) The maintaining of a mutually agreed register of fishermen, and a mutually agreed register of trawler companies. No unregistered fisherman or unregistered trawler company would be allowed to sail or operate from fishing ports covered by the Scheme. The determination of the initial size and membership of the register would obviously be of crucial importance. We draw attention to the Draft of a Hull Fishermen's Registration Scheme, in which it is proposed that the initial register should be 1,600 for that port, plus 12% reserve strength to cover holidays, sickness, etc., i.e. a total of 1,800 men. This figure

would be sub-divided into appropriate numbers for each rating. The principle should be that numbers are determined by reference to existing records of fishermen in the ports, and by reference to current sizes of fishing fleets and their manning scales.

- (ii) To pay a standard fall back pay, closely related to average earning, to registered fishermen who are temporarily without work. We would like to encourage the development of normal, stable Contracts of Employment between fishermen and individual companies, but we believe it is realistic in the first stage to assume that we must provide for men who will be dependant from time to time upon a Board-administered fall-back, which is stable and standard for the whole industry. In this proposal lies the essence of cementing a permanent relationship between the fisherman and his industry. The situation arising from this proposal would in other words be comparable with the Dock Labour Scheme before the final Devlin Stage of 1967. The emergence of normal Contracts of Employment, and attachment on a permanent basis to an individual company, could proceed against the fall-back security for the temporarily unemployed fisherman (?).
- (iii) The provision of training and welfare facilities for fishermen. These two functions will assume a great importance in the Scheme, and it is entirely appropriate that they should be jointly administered and controlled through the Boards, which would work in conjunction with Nautical Colleges, the Board of Trade etc. Both functions have been badly neglected by the industry in the past, and require both improvement and standardisation from port to port. Voluntary organisations have in the past sought to make provision for fishermen's welfare and social needs, often with inadequate funds, unevenly across the industry, and sometimes, regrettably, with a nineteenth century paternal attitude to the men. The industry needs a modern educational, training, and welfare service.
- (iv) To administer the discipline and appeals system, and assume responsibility for imposing penalties on employees and employers who are in breach of the system and its regulations. This will build on the recent experience of Joint Disciplinary Committees in the ports, but will ensure that the decisions are genuinely arrived at by joint agreement in all cases.

- (v) The allocation of men to vessels - except in cases of men on long-term regular contracts with companies - through the operation of a Port Labour Officer, who would be an employee of the Board in each port.
- (vi) To own their own premises in the ports, and to employ a local Manager, and other staff for welfare and other functions.
- (vii) To provide an Occupational Health Service, a vital need in an industry with heavy incidence of major diseases, such as cancer, cardiac and stomach disorders.

4.4 The Scope of the Scheme

There is a clear need to define the coverage of the Scheme at the outset with the greatest care. Experience in the docks industry shows that if the Scheme is confined to a few well-defined port areas, other areas of the coast-line and river systems of the country may be used by employers seeking to avoid their obligations under the Scheme. Whilst an exception is appropriate for share-fishermen, we believe that the legislation should define the whole coast-line and navigable river systems from which persons employed in the business of near, middle, and distant water trawling may sail, as coming within the scope of the Scheme.

4.5 Financing the Scheme

It will be necessary to decide on the sources of finance with which to operate the Scheme. The Dock Labour Board draws its funds from a levy on registered employers, and we see no reason why this precedent should not be followed in the case of fishing. The principle that the employer should be responsible for regular and permanent employment of the labour force can indeed only be established if the employers are (collectively in the first stage) required to pay for the fall-back entitlements of temporarily unemployed fishermen.

- 4.6 Only by this means will the employers be made more conscious of their long-term commitment to their employees and so develop non-casual attitudes to their function as employers. We therefore propose that a levy on registered employers should be enforced, the value of which should be sufficient to finance at least that part of the Board's expenditure concerned with the fall-back pay system.

4.7 We have proposed other important functions for the Board, including training, health and welfare, the employment of appropriate staff, etc. It should be a matter for discussion between the Union, Employers and Government, as to whether further contributions should be required for these purposes from the owners, or whether a government grant would be more appropriate. Government finance would be justified on a number of grounds, including the obvious argument that successive Governments have accepted that the fishing companies were entitled to large sums of money in the form of grants and loans for vessel building and operation. These funds have largely gone to ensuring the continued profitability of the private owners; it is reasonable that state finance should be available to ensure that employees in an industry so dependent on the state receive adequate welfare and personnel services.

SECTION VOTHER LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

- 5.1 The question as to whether fishermen should be brought under the Contracts of Employment Act and the Redundancy Payments Act requires careful consideration in the context of our proposals for a Statutory Registration Scheme. At present, and in the absence of such a Scheme, the Union has pressed at port level for the acceptance of the standards of these two Acts. In the Dock Labour Scheme they do not apply, but dockworkers have a contractual relation with the Dock Labour Board, and a voluntary severance payment scheme which substitutes for Redundancy Payments.
- 5.2 The essential requirement for fishermen therefore is that the standards defined in the two Acts should represent their minimum entitlements under our proposed reforms, and that the short-term "Articles of Agreement" Contract deriving from Merchant Shipping Laws under which fishermen now sail, should be finally superseded. If, on the model of the Dock Labour Scheme, fishermen are provided with a contractual relationship with the NMF, this should not be the "floor" of collective security for all registered men, without discouraging or preventing the growth of normal Contract relations with individual companies. This may of course lead to the emergence of two classes of fishermen, "pool" and "company" men, as occurred in the docks industry before the Devlin reforms. We would not want to see the stabilisation on a long-term basis of such a situation, and from our experience in the docks industry, would be looking for an early initiative towards a second stage which would be comparable with the Devlin process. We also of course retain as a long-term goal the public ownership of the industry, when the problems of multi-company employment, transfers of men between employers, and therefore the necessity of a "pool" system, would be finally overcome.
- 5.3 A Redundancy Payments Scheme will be necessary for the industry; its standards must be not less than those applicable under the Redundancy Payments Act, and should indeed be superior to them, as is the case in several public and private industries and companies. If it proves necessary to reduce the size of the Register from its initial establishment, this must be on the basis of natural wastage and voluntary redundancy only

and this latter provision obviously requires that Severance Payment should be adequate to induce voluntary retirement from the Scheme.

5.4 The Union will be pressing hard for the fullest implementation of the Health & Safety at Work Act in the industry, including especially the provision of Union-elected safety representatives on board each trawler, a step which we advocated in our evidence to the Holland-Martin Inquiry, but which that body saw fit to reject. It would be ironic indeed if, now that the state has decreed that employees in general have the right to elect safety representatives at the place of work, the most dangerous occupation of all should continue to meet with further resistance on this matter.

5.5 We shall also be looking for the application of the Company Pensions Act to the employees of trawler companies.

SECTION VIPUBLIC OWNERSHIP

- 6.1 We have seen no reason to conceal our ultimate policy objective of achieving the public ownership of the trawling industry. It is in any case an aim which has been publicly affirmed by the TGWU for some time. The tradition of the British Labour Movement is that, in seeking reforms in the direction of a democratic socialist society, we announce our goals, and campaign for them in an open democratic manner, seeking to persuade our members, our fellow trade unionists in other industries, and society as a whole, of the necessity for the next step. This process inevitably prolongs the process of change; it is the price we pay for our adherence to the principles of parliamentary democracy. Those who, whilst opposing the reforms which we seek, call upon us at the same time to respect the processes of parliamentary reform, should not complain if the result is to prolong the period of "uncertainty". We do not apologise for subjecting the trawler industry to a continuing period of political debate, during which the healthy scrutiny which it will receive is entirely to be justified in the light of the past performance of the industry, both in terms of technical and economic efficiency, in terms of its human relations, and its accident and health records.
- 6.2 We do not offer at this stage a detailed blue-print for public ownership. But all the evidence suggests that trawling will continue to need public finance, as in the past, to remain viable and to meet the multiple shocks and challenges now facing it. Our proposals in this document strongly argue the case for further statutory intervention - and no doubt finance - to modernise and humanise the employment relationship. We cannot and will not, during the transitional period to public ownership, remain content with the limited progress achieved in these fields since the Holland-Martin recommendations were published in 1969 and which are themselves far short of full implementation (8). The principle of public accountability where public finance is involved must be extended as a matter of urgency in the industry.

6.3 Ultimately, the transition to public ownership will be facilitated by the past and continuing participation of state funds in the industry, and by the system of Joint Labour Board control which we propose. Our goal is ambitious; to participate in transforming a backward industry with an unhappy history into a rational, modern, democratic enterprise, whose twin concerns are the health, security, happiness and prosperity of its workers, and the long-term preservation and development of one of mankind's most precious resources.

Footnotes:

1. Trawler Safety : Final Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Trawler Safety (The Holland-Martin Inquiry) Cmd 4114, HMSO 1969 page 76, para. 189
2. Annual Report & Accounts : White Fish Authority, 1974-5, pp. 8-9
3. Holland-Martin Report, Trawler Safety, page 100, para. 244
4. Holland-Martin Report, page 78, paras. 192-193
5. Holland-Martin Report, page 6, Recommendation no. 61
6. At present, there is no means whereby the Union can intervene when the Owners' Association in a port enrolls men on to their Register, even where there are nominally joint Registration Committees in existence. Whilst the casual system of employment continues, the owners will inflate the numbers on the register in order to have a labour reserve always available, to provide for fluctuations in demand and also to have potential strike-breaking labour during periods of industrial dispute. When the time comes to determine the size of a statutory and jointly controlled register, these inflated figures must be reduced, although certainly not by excluding older and previously regular fishermen who may have been unemployed for long periods recently, due to the economic depression. All bona fide and regular fishermen must be given the opportunity of joining the register, and offered generous voluntary severance pay if this is necessary to reduce to a realistic size the numbers on the initial register.
7. The problem of decasualisation is not readily and simply to be solved by the orthodox application of the Contracts of Employment Act. If it were, fishing would not be the awkward industry which it undoubtedly is in its employment relationships. Amongst other factors fishermen do from time to time wish to transfer from one company to another, and there is little sense in imposing a pattern of contractual relationships which conflict with the rhythm and customs of the men. But this point makes the need for a register, and a fall-back pay system, all the more necessary.
8. A special Unit was reported to have been set up in the Department of Trade and Industry in 1973, to speed up the implementation of outstanding recommendations of Holland-Martin; the Union now requires to see a full published account of the working of that Unit, and its progress towards its declared objective.

An Employment Scheme for Wage-Earning Fishermen,
T & GWU Fishing Policy Document No.2,
June, 1976.

TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION

NATIONAL FISHING

POLICY DOCUMENT (2)

AN- EMPLOYMENT SCHEME FOR WAGE-EARNING FISHERMEN

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AN EMPLOYMENT SCHEME FOR WAGE-EARNING FISHERMENOBJECTIVE

To lay down guidelines for an employment scheme which will lead to a significant improvement in terms and conditions of employment of wage-earning fishermen in the trawling industry.

INTRODUCTION

Since for many years terms and conditions of employment within the fishing industry have lagged considerably behind those in other industries, the Transport and General Workers' Union has analysed the major problem areas within the industry and offers the following recommendations.

1. National Labour Board for Fishing (NLBF)*

Due to the fragmented structure of the industry and the labour problems ensuing from this, the establishment of a statutory National Labour Board for Fishing together with local or port Boards would provide a measure of cohesion and stability of employment which are wholly lacking at the present time. The structure and functions of these Boards would be analagous to the National Dock Labour Boards since the latter have arguably been of considerable importance in ensuring both greater efficiency in the registered ports and in increased regularity of employment for dock-workers.

2. The Structure of the NLBF

It is envisaged by the T & GWU that this National Board will consist of a chairman, depute chairman and not less than seven nor more than eleven other members. The chairman would be appointed by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries after consultation with his Department, the trawler/

* An alternative title is National Fisheries Labour Board.

trawler-owners' organisations and the trade unions and associations representing all wage-earning categories of trawler personnel on near, middle and distant-water trawlers.* All other members of the Board would be appointed - in equal numbers-by the registered employers and the trade unions. These members would elect the depute chairman subject to the rule that employers' and trade-union representatives nominate a candidate in alternate years.

The members of the Board, other than the chairman, would be appointed for a period of two years at which time they might be eligible for re-appointment for a further two years.

Trade union representatives on the National Board and local Boards will, when carrying out their duties, receive remuneration commensurate with their average earnings.

Decisions reached by the National Board should be based on a simple majority of the members present and voting at a meeting. The chairman would have a single casting vote.

The Board must be given the authority to make additions to the list of registered ports (see Appendix II) if this were felt necessary by changing circumstances or unanticipated events.

3. The Functions of the National Board

Given that the major objects of the proposed Employment Scheme are to maintain regularity, and security of employment and the efficient performance - and safety - of registered fishing vessels, the Board should pursue such policies, operations and activities as might further these ends.

The/

* Share-fishermen, operating within the inshore sector of the fishing industry, would be excluded from the Employment Scheme. See Appendix I for List of Categories of Registered Fishermen.

The major functions of the National Board should include those policy-decisions, operations and activities which would -

- (a) ensure that each registered port had a jointly-controlled register of trained and qualified fishermen. This is, of course, in line with one of the recommendations made by the Holland-Martin Committee, "The owners and the Union should co-operate in setting up registration schemes in all ports in order to lay down common standards of character, health, fitness and training for new recruits.* The Report also added, "The schemes should be jointly controlled by both sides of the industry..."** (There are registration schemes in operation in the major fishing ports but it is the T & GWU's opinion that they are less than adequate.)
- (b) regulate the recruitment and training of fishermen, the discharge from the scheme of those employees who wish to leave this sector of the industry, and the allocation to employment and the transfer between registered employers of registered fishermen.
- (c) determine and define the criteria for the standardization of terms and conditions, and fair practices of employment, such as wages, duties and responsibilities, hours of work, rest periods, holiday entitlement, discipline and grievance procedures, paid leave of absence, unpaid leave of absence, trade-union representation etc., These criteria, where possible, should be based upon standards and practices obtaining in other industries but not necessarily other maritime industries.
- (d) grant or refuse to a registered employer permission to terminate - or suspend - the employment of a registered fisherman.
- (e)/

* Recommendation Number 61, Trawler Safety : Final Report of Inquiry into Trawler Safety, Cmnd 4114, HMSO, 1969.
** ibid, p. 81.

- (e) . determine, and regularly review, with the assistance and co-operation of the local Boards, the size of the port registers both of employers and fishermen with regard to increases or reductions in numbers brought about by changing circumstances within the registered ports.
- (f) maintain the employers' register and where circumstances require, remove from - or introduce to - the Register those employers who warrant such action.
- (g) keep, and review, the list of Registered Ports having regard to changing circumstances and/or unanticipated events.
- (h) in consultation with the Training Services Agency, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Board of Trade, the White Fish Authority, registered employers' associations, the trade unions and the appropriate educational bodies, review and up-date training methods and qualifications.
- (i) ensure that all categories of registered fishermen are given the right to paid leave of absence both to undertake training and in order to perform trade union duties.
- (j) establish, and review, a scheme for trade-union representation on board registered fishing vessels. Here, the Board might look to the experience of the National Union of Seamen in shipboard representation.
- (k) make adequate provision for the physical well-being of registered fishermen in terms of the introduction of effective port medical services.
- (l) introduce, and monitor, a redundancy payments scheme that is at least equal to the provisions laid out in the Redundancy Payments Act, 1965 and any such amendments that have, or might, be enacted.
- (m)/

- (m) develop, and review, what, following the Merchant Navy Established Service Scheme, might be called a "medical severance payments agreement". The object of this would be to provide adequate payments (see Paragraph 1) to registered fishermen who because of age, illness, injury or physical disability are not able to continue with their employment on fishing vessels.
- (n) establish, and administer, a reasonable pension scheme along the lines laid down by the TUC in its 'Guide to Company Pension Schemes'.
- (o) levy and obtain from registered employers such contributions as the Board deems necessary to meet the cost of operating the Employment Scheme.
- (p) design a programme whereby registered fishermen wishing to transfer to shore-based employment are given assistance in job placement. (The Holland-Martin Committee recommended that means should be sought to "help trawler skippers obtain jobs ashore when they leave the sea".* This is a laudable object and it should be extended to cover all categories of registered fishermen seeking alternative employment.)
- (q) carry out any other appropriate functions not heretofore discussed.

4. Local Labour Board for Fishing

In order to achieve optimum efficiency in the operation of this Employment Scheme, the National Board must delegate to the local Boards as many of the afore-mentioned functions as possible. In any event the National Board must at all times enter into consultation with local Boards before any changes are made in policies, procedures and practices

5./

* ibid, P. 7. Recommendation No. 76.

5. The Structure of the Local Labour Board for Fishing

In each registered port there would be a local Board which would control the local Employment Scheme. This Board should consist of an equal number of members representing the trade unions of trawler crews and the registered employers. This number of Board members should be not less than eight and not more than twelve. The local Board will appoint a chairman and depute chairman and these appointments would require the approval of the National Board. Employer and trade union representatives will nominate the candidate for the chair in alternate years. All appointments to the local Boards would be for a period of two years at which time they might be eligible for re-appointment for a further two years.

As with the National Board, decisions reached by the local Board would be based upon a majority vote of the members present and voting at a meeting. The chairman will have a casting vote.

Trade-union representatives whilst on Board duties would receive remuneration commensurate with their average earnings.

6. The Functions of the Local Boards

The local Boards would be responsible to the National Board for matters of local policy and for local administration of the Employment Scheme. The major functions of the local Board should include those policy-decisions, operations and activities which would -

- (a) maintain, and review, both the employers' and employees' registers.
- (b) allocate registered fishermen to registered employers with provision made for the former to state their preference as to type of vessel. Where agreement cannot be reached between a fisherman and his employer on the former's choice of vessel, the Board would adjudicate. In other words, the Board would act as an/

- an employment agent in terms of allocation of labour, the payment of wages etc. The Board would also ensure that fishermen on leave, or attending training courses, carrying out trade-union duties, on holiday, on sick leave etc., would receive the appropriate remuneration and that payment were made of any contributions to pension schemes, of trade-union subscriptions and of insurance stamps etc.
- (c) grant or refuse to a registered employer permission to terminate, or suspend, the employment of a registered fisherman.
 - (d) ensure that all categories of registered fishermen are given the right to paid leave of absence both to undertake training and in order to carry out trade-union duties.
 - (e) make the fullest possible use of available but temporarily unemployed fishermen.
 - (f) maintain a records system of employment, training, earnings and any other records that are essential for the optimum efficiency of the local Employment Scheme.
 - (g) establish a disciplinary and grievances procedure which is both fair and reasonable. In terms of discipline and grievances, cases would be dealt with at local level and the National Board ought not to assume the role of "appeals tribunal". The local Board would be given the authority to institute, where necessary, a local appeals tribunal consisting of an employers' representative a trade-union official and an independent chairman.
 - (h) carry out all other functions which are deemed appropriate or necessary, or such functions which, from time to time, may be delegated to the local Board by the National Board.

SUBSTANTIVE AGREEMENT7. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF REGISTERED FISHERMEN

It is understood that every registered fisherman would be given the rights as outlined heretofore and would meet the obligations of the Employment Scheme. A refusal by a fisherman to meet their obligations would make him subject to discipline within the Code of Practice.

8. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF REGISTERED EMPLOYERS

Every registered employer would be given the rights as outlined heretofore and would meet the obligations of the Employment Scheme. A refusal to carry out these obligations would result in sanctions being employed in order to bring about compliance or dismissal from the Register.

9. WAGES AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT OF REGISTERED FISHERMEN

It would be a condition of the employment contract between the registered fisherman and the registered employer that wage rates would be set down at National Level, i.e. N.J.I.C. Fishing, with the exception of the share-element, which will be negotiated on a Port to Port basis, and terms and conditions of employment would be in accordance with the National Agreement that was in force.

Skippers and Mates - Salaries

The skippers' and the mates' salaries shall be determined on a different basis and in separate negotiations/

negotiations conducted between the appropriate Union, or Officers' Guild, and the employers.

Crews - Wages

Below is given an example of the suggested wages of registered crew members, other than the skipper and mate.

Basic Annual Wage Rates for Wet Fish Trawler Crews

Chief Engineer	£4,800
Bosun	£4,400
Third Hand	£4,200
Deck Hand	£4,000
Spare Hand	£4,000
Cook	£4,000
Second Engineer	£4,400
Greaser	£4,000
Radio Officer	£4,400
Trainee (age 21)	£3,200

Share

The share should be determined on a Port to Port basis, and should be negotiated between the appropriate parties.

Fall-Back Rate

The fall-back rate should be applicable when fishermen are returned to the registration office pool which will normally be due to the lack of employment vacancies. This rate should be set at £3,000 per annum, or the equivalent percentage based on the time spent on the register pool e.g. 1 week equals £60.00.

Holiday Pay

The holiday pay should be based on the average pay of the preceding three months.

Sickness Pay

This should be based on the average of the fishermen's P60 Statement for the preceding year. If unable to furnish this document the figure should be based on the fall-back pay of £60.00 per week.

Pensions

A suitable pension scheme should be drawn up for every registered fisherman, which would entitle him to receive benefits in excess of that laid down under the State Scheme. This could be brought about by a scheme which has a contributory element.

Holidays

Given that fishermen are unable to benefit from statutory holidays, together with the hazardous nature of their work, it is essential that a high level of holidays be granted. We estimate this to be valued at eight weeks per annum. On service to distant waters we would recommend that any trip of four weeks or more duration should entitle fishermen to a leave allocation of 50 per cent of the time spent at sea, i.e. 1 day's leave for every two days spent at sea on any voyage of four weeks or more.

Holidays - Qualification Time

Full entitlement should be granted on realising one year's continuous membership on the register.

Training

Trainees can only be recruited after joint agreement has been reached between Employers and Trade Unions, that new recruits are required. Pre-requisite of entry to the industry must be that adequate training has been given. We recommend that the industry i.e. Unions and Employers, design an appropriate syllabus.

10. HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK - TRAWLERS

This section dealing with Health and Safety in the trawling industry must be seen as the most complex section to deal with, due to the obviously dangerous conditions that prevail. To date the Department of Trade (Marine Division) have had an exhaustive look at this question, which resulted in their issuing a Recommended Code of Safety. In the period in which they looked at the safety in the trawling industry, they consulted many other interested parties, amongst whom were: International Labour Organisation, Inter-Governmental Consultative Organisation, I. M. C. O. etc., which naturally is rather complex, albeit that it deals primarily with Structural Safety and this omits matters of personal safety, which we feel should be of equal importance.

Because of this and for the many other difficulties involved, our Union the Transport & General Workers' Union, have decided to do an independent paper on Safety (T. & G. W. U. Policy Document (3) Decasualisation), which will also include matters on Discipline at Sea.

CONCLUSION

If these rather broad recommendations were to be accepted by both the Government and the Employers then the objects of greater efficiency and security of employment could be attained. It was the industry's own trade newspaper which argued "while decasualisation (of employment) has been a priority among all other major industries in this country, the hiring of fishermen remains a throwback to the Victorian era".* In the aftermath of the United Kingdom - Iceland Agreement, the fishermen deserve sympathetic consideration and in any event, the recommendations contained herein simply reflect industrial relations practices that have existed in other industries for some considerable time. It is time therefore, that fishermen were regarded as sea-going industrial workers rather than as second-class seafarers subjected to unreasonable maritime laws and denied the provision of both enlightened industrial legislation and fair employment practices.

It follows from this, then that Trade Union membership must be a pre-requisite of entry to the Registration Scheme.

If H. M. Government intends to have a modern and economic fishing fleet, it must also be prepared to finance and support both the present operation and its future. In setting up and maintaining the National Fishing Labour Board, the Government must see this as a pre-requisite of rationalisation, and in establishing a subsidy level for/

* Fishing News, 12th December, 1975.

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for the industry, they are allotting to it the importance of its contribution to the Nation's larder and its self-dependence in making available to the Nation the best protein food available to all.

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF NATIONAL FISHING COMMITTEE
TRANSPORT & GENERAL WORKERS' UNION.

JUNE, 1976

APPENDIX IPROPOSED LISTS OF CATEGORIES OF REGISTERED FISHERMEN*(a) Wet Fish Trawlers

Skipper
 Mate
 Bosun
 Third Hand
 Deck Hand
 Spare Hand
 Cook
 Chief Engineer
 Second Engineer
 Greaser
 Radio Officer
 Trainee

(b) Block Freezer Trawler

Skipper
 Mate
 Second Mate
 Junior Officer
 Radio Officer
 Spare Hand
 Chief Engineer
 Second Engineer
 Third Engineer
 Fourth Engineer
 Cook
 Second Cook
 Trainee

(c) Filleter Freezer Trawler

Skipper
 Mate
 Second Mate
 Junior Officer
 Radio Officer
 Spare Hand
 Chief Engineer
 Second Engineer
 Third Engineer
 Fourth Engineer
 Factory Manager
 Assistant Factory Manager
 Factory Hands
 Factory Mechanic
 Greaser
 Meal Plant Operators
 Cook
 Second Cook
 Trainee

*This list of categories of crews would be extended if and when other types of fishing vessels were brought under the registration scheme.

APPENDIX IIPROPOSED LIST OF REGISTERED PORTS*

Aberdeen

Granton

North Shields

Hull

Grimsby

Lowestoft

Yarmouth

Fleetwood

Milford Haven

*The National Board would have the authority to extend this list of ports having regard to changing circumstances and unanticipated events.

APPENDIX IIIDEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

'Registered employer' would mean an employer whose name is entered in the employers' register.

'Registered fisherman' would mean a fisherman whose name is entered in the register of fishermen.

'Employers' register' would mean the register of employers in the port kept by the local Board.

'Fishermens' register' would mean the register of fishermen kept in the port by the local Board.

'Registered Port' would mean any fishing port set out in Appendix II or any port subsequently added to the list by the National Labour Board for Fishing.

'Registered vessel' would mean a vessel whose name is entered in the register of vessels.

APPENDIX 11

Proposals for the Re-organisation of the Arrangements
for the Registration, Engagement and Discharge of
Deep Sea Fishermen, British Fishing Federation, Hull,
January, 1977.

Secretary: I. C. Thorburn

BRITISH FISHING FEDERATION LIMITED

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Your Ref.:

Our Ref.: AL/JB/16/1

17 January 1977

D.K. Cairns Esq.,
Regional Secretary,
Transport & General Workers' Union,
Bevin House,
George Street,
H U L L HU1 3DB

18 JAN 1977

As you know we have been considering for some time the question of decasualisation which you raised in your Policy Document No.1 which we have studied carefully. For a variety of reasons which I do not propose to go into here but which - generally - should be evident from our draft proposals (a copy of which is enclosed) we are unable to proceed along the precise lines suggested by your union. We are, however, prepared to entertain a decasualisation scheme for fishermen as I stated in my letter to you of 12 October.

We have crossed a number of knotty problems in considering this issue and, despite the advice sought and time spent upon them, we have by no means resolved them all. Normally as I am sure you will appreciate, we would defer placing our own proposals before you until such time as all such problems were resolved. But Mr. Harold Walker has expressed his anxiety to us that the momentum created should not be lost and we are responding to this by letting you have our draft proposals before they have taken a form which would exhaustively and accurately express our views on decasualisation.

I am, however, confident that you and your colleagues will accept them in the spirit in which they are proffered and recognising that, while there may be gaps to be filled and points to be clarified or amended, our basic approach is clear:

- (a) ~~a substantial proportion of the fishermen in any part to which the scheme is to apply should be shown to desire decasualisation;~~
- (b) ~~each fisherman concerned should be given the choice of decasualisation or remaining on the casual section of the register;~~
- (c) ~~no barriers (other than those concerning educational, technical and medical fitness) should be placed on entry into the casual section; and~~
- (d) ~~HMG should permit unemployed decasualised fishermen to draw unemployment benefits while drawing topping-up benefits, in a manner comparable to that under the MI Establishment Scheme.~~

I should add that we would have preferred not to have given you our proposals for decasualisation before obtaining a firm assurance from HMG on this last point: ~~the taking of the legislative measures that we have indicated to Ministers as being appropriate to our proposals is a necessary condition of any decasualisation scheme being implemented.~~ We are naturally reluctant to enter into negotiations which might turn out to be fruitless not because of a failure of your union and ourselves to agree on the terms of a scheme, but because of a failure of HMG to provide those measures. I have pointed this out to Mr. Walker and suggested that firmer assurances would lubricate, if not provide some motive power, to the negotiating machinery that is to be used for this purpose.

In any event, I look forward to hearing from you when you are ready to enter into discussions with us, so as to arrange a mutually convenient time and place for an initial meeting. It is probable that our representatives will be led by Andrew L. Marr, accompanied by W.F.S. Letten, D.N. Parkes and myself.

✓ I am copying this letter and its enclosure to Mr. Harold Walker with whom we are not seeking any meeting, for the time being at least.

BRITISH FISHING FEDERATION LIMITEDProposals forThe Reorganisation of the Arrangements for the Registration,
Engagement and Discharge of Deep Sea FishermenPreamble

α The world fisheries scene is changing rapidly. It may be expected to continue doing so for some years yet as fishery limits generally move out from 12 to 200 miles or thereabouts. This in itself implies substantial structural changes for the world's fishing industries, particularly for those that have traditionally fished in middle and distant waters to any significant extent, as has ours in Britain.

The general directions of the changes demanded are well known: a diminution in middle and distant waters and some expansion in home-waters. But the magnitudes are not known; and, for the UK trawling industry especially, great uncertainty surrounds the future in the short as well as the middle and long terms.

Our position is severely complicated by the fact that we do not and cannot know for some time the outcome either of the revision of the provisions of the common fisheries policy concerning access to waters or of EEC's negotiations with those third countries off whose coasts EEC vessels fish or whose vessels fish off the coasts of EEC states.

Yet the results of that revision and those negotiations are of paramount importance in determining both the future size and the shape of the UK trawling fleets. And without knowledge of the future structure of the industry it is impossible quantitatively (and in some respects qualitatively) to assess our manpower requirements and, hence, what degree of decasualisation would be appropriate. For these and the reasons indicated below, we cannot accept proposals for the complete decasualisation of the present labour force. However - subject to certain statutory provisions being made - we are ready, despite the inappropriateness of the timing, to embark upon the road of decasualisation provided it pays proper regard not only to the condition of the industry and the uncertainties facing it, but also to the nature of fishermen themselves - by leaving the initial choice to them and by leaving that choice open.

1. Introduction

- (a) Traditionally, fishermen in the deep sea industry have for a variety of reasons been engaged on a casual basis. Increasingly, however, the casual form has masked the decasualised fact of growing numbers of fishermen being retained on articles for extended periods. As a counterpart to this, the termination of articles has occurred in a growing proportion of cases as a result of the man choosing to sign himself off. In recent years trends have been accentuated by the development of Port Registration Schemes, as well as for other reasons.

- (b) Inroads into the casual system have also been made by trawler officers entering into annual contracts with the companies employing them. Furthermore, at Aberdeen the port registration scheme incorporates a provision for company contracts for fishermen generally.
- (c) It is important to note, however, that the longer-term commitment which decasualisation implies is still disliked by a large majority of trawler officers and crews. A few years ago the Hull Trawler Officers' Guild had to drop its support for a general system of annual contracts because of the opposition from its own membership. Even now only a small proportion of trawler officers at any of the major ports accept the contractual system offered to them by their employing companies. Only a minority of the fishermen at Aberdeen, and a diminishing minority at that, accept company contracts. And, as has been noted, it is increasingly the practice for deep sea fishermen generally to sign themselves off articles as employers allow articles to run on from trip to trip.
- (d) ~~The fact appears to be that the adventurous spirit, which is one of the chief characteristics of those who are attracted to the fishing industry, regards as irksome and indeed repugnant the restrictions which are the corollary of decasualised employment.~~ Further evidence of this is given in all the other sections of the British fishing industry where the share system almost invariably prevails. These fishermen are regarded as self-employed and are free to come and go as they and their co-venturers please.
- (e) It is therefore a mistake to believe that deep sea fishermen generally or in any substantial proportion would welcome the introduction of compulsory decasualisation. Accordingly, we believe each fisherman should have the right to determine for himself whether he wishes to be decasualised and to accept the restrictions on his freedom that are the counterpart of the advantages of decasualisation. We propose, therefore, that each port's register of fishermen should consist of two parts, a casual section and a decasualised section (with the latter subdivided into company and port pools), with each person on the register being free to move from one section or sub-section to the other subject to the appropriate conditions contained in the scheme being satisfied.
- (f) Furthermore, while it is true that some fishermen move from one trawling port to another, these fishermen constitute a small minority. Moreover, and in any event, the type of fishing and, consequently, the characteristics of the labour force required vary significantly from one trawling port to another. For these reasons, decasualisation should be considered, introduced and administered on a port basis. However, there may be some merit in establishing a national Liaison Committee to ensure harmonisation of activities and to facilitate such transfers of fishermen between ports as may be sought and deemed expedient.
- (g) ~~The financial and economic condition of the trawling industry does not permit it now or in the foreseeable future to carry the whole of the costs of decasualisation.~~ In any event, it would be inequitable for it to do so given the provisions of the Merchant Navy Scheme under which unemployed seamen

continue to receive unemployment benefit while receiving Establishment Benefit under the Scheme. Statutory authority to prevent an unemployed decasualised fisherman being debarred from unemployment benefit by reason only of his receipt of some comparable Establishment Benefit is one of the indispensable conditions of the introduction of any decasualisation scheme. (It may be added in passing that while members of the Merchant Navy Scheme enjoy this facility, share fishermen are permitted - though classed as self-employed - to enjoy unemployment, sickness and other national insurance benefits which are otherwise confined to Class 1 contributors. In the marine context, therefore, the trawling industry may be said to be discriminated against).

- (h) It is a cardinal principle of decasualisation that each decasualised man shall accept all reasonable directions from his company or port association (depending on whether he is a member of a company pool or of the port pool - see paras. 4 & 5) as to the ship in which and the times at which he sails. Though frequent and large switching of crews from one ship to another is not envisaged, economical working is impossible without the flexibility that switching provides.
- (j) Finally, we see no merit in bringing into a decasualisation scheme any matters which relate to training (in respect of which a Manpower Council for the fishing industry is under active consideration), or safety - each port has its own Safety Committee consisting of experts on the subject and including trade union representation - or terms and conditions of employment (for the determination of which collective bargaining machinery already exists) or, indeed, any other functions. In short, we propose a scheme which is strictly confined to the registration, employment and discharge of wage-earning fishermen.

2. Coverage of the Scheme

- (a) Initially, the scheme shall apply to the ports of but it may subsequently apply to any other port in the UK where the employers or fishermen wish to introduce the scheme save that the scheme shall not apply in any port where less than 30% of the fishermen entitled to be decasualised apply to be made so.
- (b) The scheme shall not apply to
- (i) share fishermen;
 - (ii) radio officers;
 - (iii) skippers and mates;
 - (iv) any certificated officer (other than a skipper or mate) who is engaged on a company contract of any kind in addition to the normal sea-going contract formed by the signing of articles.

3. Qualifications for Decasualisation

- (a) Entry into the decasualised section of a port's register of fishermen shall be offered to all men on the register who have achieved, without having committed a serious act of indiscipline during the period over which the average is struck, an annual average of 240 days on articles in the port concerned during the three years prior to the date of application for decasualisation save that anyone who has completed less than three years' service in that port shall, subject to having completed one year's service, be eligible to apply for decasualisation if such annual average of 240 days on articles has been attained during the period elapsing from the date on which he was first signed on articles in that port to the date of application.
- (b) Those fishermen who have completed three or more years of satisfactory service but who have narrowly failed to meet the requirement of an annual average of 240 days on articles may nevertheless apply for decasualisation and the Port Registration Committee (see para. 9) shall have absolute discretion in deciding whether or not to accept any such application.

4. The Various Parts of the Port Register

- (a) The port register shall be divided into a casual section and a decasualised section. There shall be no restrictions on entry to the casual section of the register other than those constituted by the prescribed medical, educational, vocational and aptitude tests and those laid down in respect of any man whose name has been removed from the register of that or any other port operating this scheme.
- (b) The name of each successful applicant for decasualisation shall be entered on the decasualised section of the register and remain on it until such time as he is, because of unsatisfactory conduct or for any other reason, transferred to the casual section or removed entirely from the register, in accordance with the rules of the scheme.
- (c) The decasualised section shall consist of a port pool and, provided there are valid applications for membership and company acceptances of any or all such applications, a company pool where only one trawling company is involved or company pools where more than one such company is involved.
- (d) The entry of any name on any section or sub-section of the port register shall be dependent, among other things, on evidence of satisfactory medical fitness and all such evidence shall be provided by the industry medical officer. The maintenance of any name on the register shall be dependent upon continued medical fitness and, in order to ascertain this, each person entered on the register shall submit himself for medical examination to the aforementioned medical officer at such times or intervals or occasions as may be prescribed by the Port Registration Committee.

5. The Decasualised Port and Company Pools

- (a) A man seeking transfer from the port pool while remaining decasualised may apply to join a company pool provided he has been at least 200 days on articles with that company during the 12 months preceding the date of application as may a man who seeks transfer from the casual section of the register provided he meets also the appropriate conditions of para.3 above. The company to which such application is made shall not be obliged to accept all or any such applications.
- (b) ~~Any man on the casual section of the port register who satisfies the conditions laid down in para.3 above may at any time apply for transfer to the port pool within the decasualised section.~~
- (c) ~~All men on the port register who either do not qualify for, or do not wish to enjoy or do not wish to continue to enjoy, membership of the decasualised section shall remain on or be transferred to (as the case may be) the casual section of the register.~~
- (d) ~~Upon giving 28 days' notice a man may resign from the company pool to which he belongs and revert to the port pool or, as may a member of the port pool, transfer to the casual section of the register but such notice may not be given by any man during the course of a trip (which, for the purpose of this sub-paragraph and of sub-section (i) of sub-paragraph 6(a), shall be considered to be terminated on the day of docking at a UK port for discharging its catch thereat).~~
- (e) A man who voluntarily transfers himself from the decasualised to the casual section or who is transferred to the casual section in accordance with the provisions of para.6(a) may not apply for transfer back to the decasualised section until he has remained on the casual section for at least 12 months.
- (f) ~~A company shall have the absolute right not only to accept or reject applications for membership of its company pool but also, on giving the notice required by the Contracts of Employment Acts, at any time discontinue membership of any or all of the members of its pool but all men whose membership is discontinued in this way shall have the right of electing either to join the port pool or to transfer to the casual section of the register except where discontinuance results from misconduct in which case the man concerned shall be transferred to the casual section save that he may appeal against this transference to the Port Registration Committee which, if it allows the appeal, shall transfer the man's name to the sub-section of the decasualised section of the register which comprises the port pool.~~

6. The Obligations and Benefits of the Decasualised Fisherman

- (a) A decasualised fisherman shall, as a condition of decasualisation, give a commitment that he is willing:
 - (i) annually to undertake at least 240 days at sea (day of sailing to day of docking inclusive) and, in the event of his failure to undertake such days at sea, ~~his name shall be transferred from the decasualised to the casual section of the port register.~~ Before such transference occurs, the man concerned shall be given 14 days' notice of it and such notice may not be given to any man while he is still engaged on a trip. Any man in receipt of such notice may appeal

at any time before the expiry of the notice against his transference to the casual section. All such appeals shall be considered by the Port Registration Committee which shall consider each such appeal and give its decision in respect of it within 28 days of receipt of it. No transference to the casual register shall occur before the Committee's decision has been announced.

(ii) to accept directions from his company or port association, as the case may be, as to the ship in which and the times at which he sails provided always that the terms and conditions of collective agreements are observed and that holidays are taken at times determined by mutual agreement having regard both to the desires of the fisherman concerned and to commercial operating requirements. Unpaid leave may be granted in excess of the period of paid leave to which a man is entitled under his port's Holidays-with-pay Scheme provided that (1) he receives permission from the company employing him in the case of a man who is in a company pool and from the port Registrar in the case of a man who is a member of the port pool and (2) such additional holidays do not give rise to any claim for any Decasualisation Benefit as provided for in sub-para. (b) of this paragraph.

(b) A decasualised fisherman shall be entitled to a daily Decasualisation Benefit in accordance with the following scale for each day he is not on articles beyond the period of his holiday entitlement (as calculated under the port's Holidays-with-Pay Scheme) other than for such days of unpaid leave as may be agreed under the provisions of sub-section (ii) of sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph.

£x for the first 'a' days (without any of the "waiting days" prescribed under the National Insurance Acts) and

£(x-y) for the next 'b' days up to a maximum of 'c' continuous weeks and a maximum of (c + d) weeks in any one year save that for deckie learners, galley boys and trainees the benefits shall be determined by local agreement.

(c) The terms and conditions of employment applicable to fishermen while on articles shall not vary by reason only that he is on one section of the port register rather than another.

4. Financing Decasualisation Benefits

The benefits payable to an unemployed decasualised fisherman shall be paid by the port association while he is a member of the port pool and by the company concerned while a member of a company pool. The way in which the costs of the port pool arising on this and all other accounts concerned with the establishment and operation of the scheme shall be determined by the port association.

5. Disputes Machinery

All disputes arising out of the operation of this scheme should be referred by any of the parties to the dispute (the fisherman, the company or the port association) to the Port Registration Committee or to the Port Disciplinary Committee whose decisions shall be final in respect of all matters arising under paras. 3(b), 5(f) and 6(a)(i) but appeals against decisions on any other matter should be referred to such local disputes machinery as may be established in accordance with the recommendations of the DoT's Working Group on Discipline that reported last year. (If such a scheme were to be introduced, it would need to be dove-tailed where necessary with the implementation of recommendations introduced by the DoT Working Group on Discipline).

9. Port Registration Committees

- (a) The Committees shall consist of a chairman who shall be nominated by the employers in the port and of four other members drawn equally from the employers' and employees' sides with each member, including the chairman, having one vote and with decisions reached by simple majority.
- (b) The functions of these Committees shall be strictly confined to the administration of the port register of fishermen.

AI./JB/19/1
14 January 1977

Department of Employment Memorandum
and Draft Outline of a Scheme to
Decasualise the Trawler Fishing Industry,
12th May, 1978.



Appendix

15 MAY 1978

Department of Employment
8 St. James's Square London SW1Y 4JB
Telephone Direct Line 01-214 8226.
Switchboard 01-214 6000

D K Cairns Esq
Transport & General Workers'
Union
Bevin House
George Street
Hull
HU1 3DB

12 May 1978

Dear Mr Cairns

When you met the Secretary of State on 2 May 1978 it was agreed that he would write to you enclosing a note on the elements of a decasualisation scheme taking account of the discussion. It was also agreed that I would show you and Mr Laing the note in draft.

I attach the draft of a note. You will see that we have endeavoured in it to cover all the points which it seems necessary to settle before a decasualisation scheme could be brought into operation. It incorporates the results of the discussion with the Secretary of State but it also raises some fresh points and suggests possible answers. I think therefore that the status of the note is not in any sense that it is a document agreed between Union, Federation and Department of Employment and indeed it is without prejudice to the final position of any of us. It seems best, therefore, to regard it as a note by the Department of Employment which takes account of discussions with the Union and Federation which have already taken place and which is intended to serve as the basis for further discussions.

It will be for you and Mr Laing to decide in due course whether you wish these further discussions to be conducted under the aegis of the Department or not.

If you would like to have a word with me about the note I am at your disposal.

The Secretary of State has received your letter of 3 May about redundancy grants for fishermen and he will be replying to you as soon as possible. You will notice a reference to the matter in paragraph 6(d) of the attached note.

Yours sincerely

C A Larsen

C A Larsen

DRAFT OUTLINE OF A SCHEME TO DECASUALISE THE TRAWLER FISHING INDUSTRY

This outline of a scheme to decasualise the trawler fishing industry is divided into four parts:-

- (a) the nature and extent of the scheme
- (b) setting up and administering the registers
- (c) operation of the scheme and
- (d) payments to registered workers during periods without employment

THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE SCHEME

1. Registers of employees and employers will be set up at certain ports with the object of providing greater continuity of employment for employees on the register.

2. The following ports will be covered by the scheme:

Aberdeen

Fleetwood

Granton

Grimsby

Hull

North Shields

3. Workers with experience [to be defined?] in near-water, middle-water and distant-water trawling will be eligible for registration (but see para 7 (a) below) with the exception of the following classes of employee:-

Skipper

[Mate]

Radio Officer

4. At each of the ports to be covered, each eligible employee will be given details of the scheme and asked if he wishes to register.

5. Any employer operating trawlers from the ports covered by the scheme will be eligible for entry on the employers' register.

SETTING UP AND ADMINISTERING THE REGISTERS

6. Each port will set up a joint committee of employers intending to join the scheme and of the union(s) representing eligible workers to set up and to oversee the operation of the scheme. The joint committee will be composed of equal numbers of representatives of the employers and the union(s). In regard to registration, each joint committee will:-

- (a) establish the numbers of eligible employees of each category (deckhand, engineer, cook, etc) to be admitted to the register in the port, having regard to the present and prospective requirements of the fishing fleet
- (b) invite volunteers for the register from among eligible employees firstly in the port concerned and secondly, if necessary, in other ports
- (c) decide how to select workers for the register if the number of volunteers exceeds the numbers required for the register
- (d) decide what severance pay if any and under what conditions should be paid to volunteers not accepted for the register
- (e) decide the circumstances in which unregistered workers may be recruited for employment in the trawling fleet if:-
 - i. the number of volunteers falls short of the number required on the register
 - ii. there is a temporary increase in the amount of employment

- (f) alter, as necessary from time to time, the numbers on the register
- (g) set up the employers' register
- (h) determine the conditions under which the names of employees or employers may be removed from the register.

OPERATION OF THE SCHEME

7. The existence of the register will not preclude registered employers from entering into long term contracts of employment (providing payment of wages throughout) with registered workers.

8. In manning vessels, registered employers will recruit workers in the following order:-

- (a) if they wish, any workers on their permanent payroll (see para 7);
- (b) any registered workers in the port available for work;
- (c) any registered workers available for work and not currently required in other ports;
- (d) unregistered workers (see para 6(c)).

9. Registered workers will normally be expected to accept work offered to them by registered employers in their own port. If two such offers without any work in between are refused the worker concerned will incur such penalties, including removal of his name from the register, as the joint committee may decide.

PAYMENTS TO WORKERS DURING PERIODS WITHOUT EMPLOYMENT

10. During periods without employment registered workers will be eligible to draw unemployment benefit. (But see para 12 (a) below.) If for any worker the amount of any unemployment benefit drawn in respect of a day without employment falls short of £ [x], he will receive a payment from a fund to be set up in each port so that the total amount he receives by way of unemployment benefit and from the fund equals £ [x]. A registered worker will be entitled to this "topping up" payment for a period without employment not exceeding [y] months at a time. In general the arrangement will follow closely that already in operation for the Merchant Service.

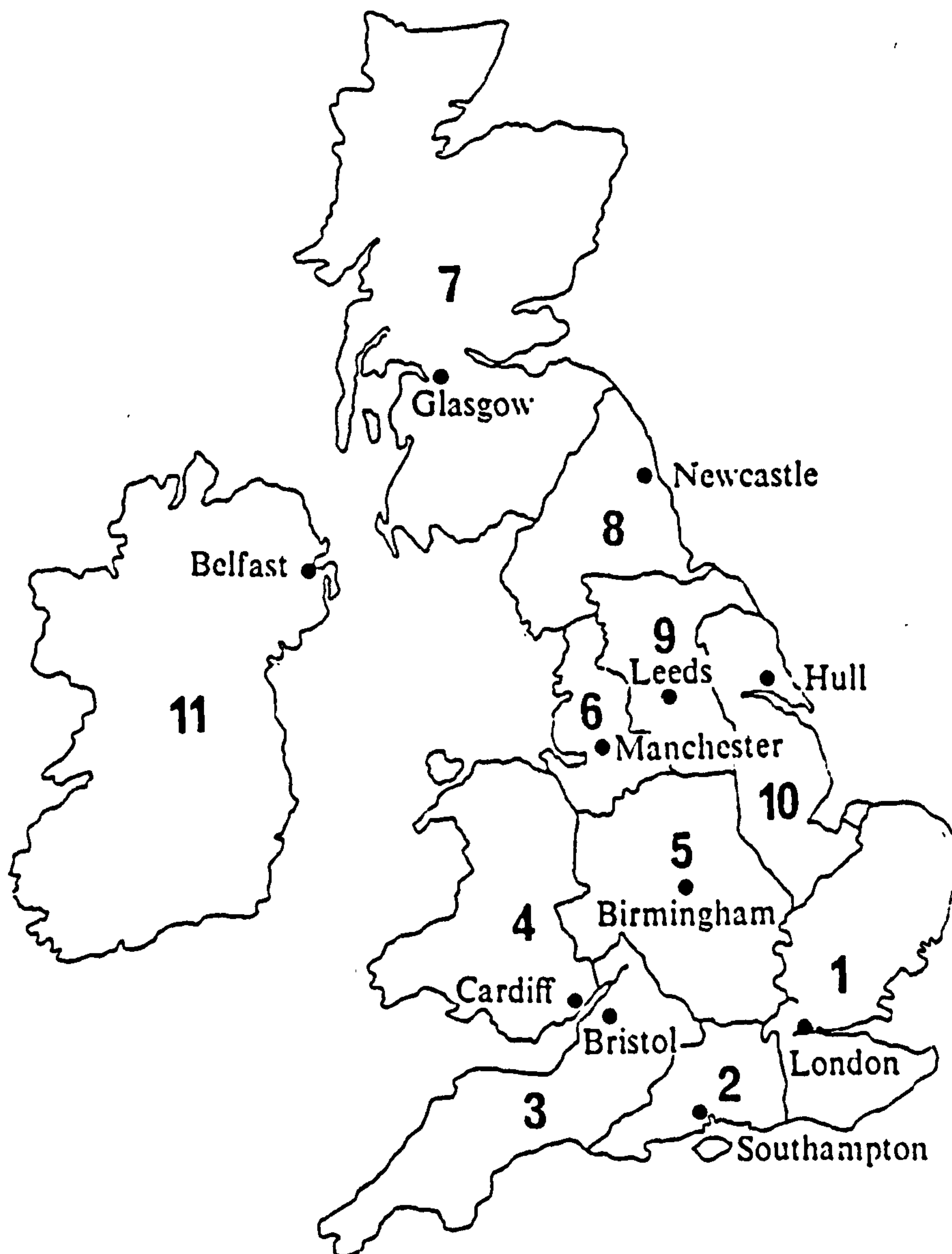
11. The setting up of the fund and the method of financing it will be matters to be determined by the registered employers in each port.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EMPLOYMENT

12. The Secretary of State for Employment will:-

- (a) explore with the Secretary of State for Social Services and other Ministerial colleagues concerned the possibility of incorporating the payment of unemployment benefit into the Scheme as outlined in para 10.
- (b) make available accommodation and staff in his local offices to help with the administration of the scheme.

The Eleven Regions of the T & GWU

The Eleven Regions of the T & GWU

Source: "T & GWU: How and Where it Works",
T & GWU, Transport House, London, 1979, p.14.

7/146 Branch Memorandum on the
Decasualisation of the Fishing Industry
and Ballot Paper.

TRANSPORT & GENERAL WORKERS' UNION

Branch 7/146
Fishermen's Section

DECASUALISATION OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY

What is decasualisation? Decasualisation of the industry means an end to employment on a trip basis and the right to a steady job with minimum guaranteed wages every week for all men on the decasualised register.

Why do we need it? Decasualisation is necessary because without it you are treated as a second class citizen, a casual labourer to be hired and fired at the whim of the employers and deprived of the benefits of many Acts of Parliament.

How will it benefit me?

- (1) A Registration Committee will be formed whereby the T. & G.W.U. will have equal say in how many fisherman will be needed to man the Aberdeen fleet, where they will come from and who they will be. The jobs of the men on the new register will be safeguarded against the current influx of fishermen from outwith the traditional Aberdeen catchment area.
- (2) The fishermen on the new register will be permanent employees and there will be sufficient registered fishermen to cover holidays, sickness and other absences throughout the fleet.
- (3) The benefits enjoyed by permanent employees will become available i.e. sick pay, redundancy pay, the right not to be unfairly dismissed and, most important, a guaranteed minimum income when no work is available.
- (4) The words "Walk about" will disappear from our vocabulary.

Will it remove my freedom to come and go as I please? Well you can't have your cake and eat it if you want to go salmon fishing or lorry driving; do it, but there will only be room in this industry for genuine full-time trawl fishermen. If you accept the benefits of decasualisation then the responsibilities must also be accepted.

Is decasualisation there for the asking? No, the employers have bitterly opposed it from the start. They want to keep the fisherman as he is, a casual labourer. Furthermore, the Government has failed to legislate to enforce decasualisation.

How do we get it then? You fight for it Brother! The National Officer of the T. & G.W.U. Fishing Section Bro. David Cairns is prepared to ask our General Executive Council for an Official Stoppage in every port in Britain that employs Trawl Fishermen if you vote to support him.

Why ballot the Port of Aberdeen first? The employers have said through their spokesmen at the B.F.F. in Hull that they do not believe the T. & G.W.U. have the support of the fishermen and furthermore that we are powerless to act against them. I am sure you will assist me in proving how wrong they are.

The question is simple Brothers - will you stand shoulder to shoulder in an official stoppage if it is necessary to attain decasualisation.

Detach and Place in Ballot Box.

Y E S

N O

J. M. Keenan,
District Officer

AFVOA and T & GWU (Fishermen's Section)
Joint Disciplinary Procedure and
7/146 Fishermen's Branch Memorandum
on Disciplinary Procedures.

THE ABERDEEN FISHING VESSEL OTTERS' ASSOCIATION LIMITED and
THE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION (SCOTTISH SEA FISHERS' SECTION)

Appendix to Agreement governing the Terms and Conditions
of Employment of Fishermen engaged on Trawlers of Over
80 ft. Registered Length

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

1. Disciplinary Procedure for Contracted Men

(a) Major Offences

All Major Disciplinary Offences will constitute a Breach of Contract and the following will be regarded as Major Offences:-

- (i) Mutiny or Sabotage.
- (ii) Assault or Dishonesty within the confines of the Industry.
- (iii) Convicted theft within the confines of the Industry.
- (iv) Refusal to sail.
- (v) Failure to Sail or Failure to Join Vessel.
- (vi) Refusing Duty.
- (vii) Reporting at the Vessel under the influence of alcohol or (taking or attempting to take alcohol, wines or derivatives of wines aboard the Vessel.)

The Disciplinary Committee of the Fishermen's Registration Scheme will have powers to suspend men from employment for a period of time in respect of any of the above offences and in addition will have powers in such cases to order that a man be not permitted to sign a new Contract either with the Association or with any other Employer for such a period as the Committee may decide. Cases of convicted theft in terms of (iii) above will result in the automatic imposition of a Sine Die Suspension.

The Committee will have powers to impose Sine Die and Permanent Suspensions at its discretion and men receiving such suspensions will have the right to appeal against these. If their appeals are rejected, however, only men receiving Sine Die Suspensions will be entitled to have their cases reviewed after six months; there will be no review granted to Permanently Suspended Fishermen.

(b) Minor Offences

All Minor Disciplinary Offences will be dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee who can impose suspensions or monetary penalties.

Examples of Minor Offences are:-

- (a) Over fifteen minutes late in reporting at Vessel.
- (b) Reporting at Vessel without gear or not having certain items of gear.
- (c) Refusing to go aboard the Vessel and change into working clothes.

- (d) Failing to notify the Employer or the Fishermen's Registration Scheme at least two hours before the time ordered for sailing of inability to sail because of illness or domestic circumstances.

(c) General Procedure

(i) All Major and Minor Offences against Discipline will be reported in writing to the Fishermen's Registration Scheme for consideration by the Disciplinary Committee which will comprise equal representation from both parties to this Agreement. Disciplinary Reports must be submitted to the Fishermen's Registration Scheme within seven days of the offence being committed otherwise Reports will be invalid. The exception to this is where offences have been committed after vessels have left the quayside when Reports must be submitted within seven days from the date of the vessel's first arrival in Aberdeen thereafter regardless of whether or not the next arrival is a half landing or a settling, otherwise these Reports will also be invalid.

(ii) The Fishermen's Registration Scheme will promulgate, in the form of a weekly circular, the decisions of the Disciplinary Committee. Firms employing men in respect of whom monetary penalties have been imposed will require to take the appropriate steps to make the necessary reductions in pay with effect from the first sea day following the men's next settlings.

(iii) Intimation in writing will be given to the men concerned of the proposed imposition of any penalty.

(d) Appeals

(i) A Disciplinary Appeals Committee, comprising two representatives from each of the parties to this Agreement and an Independent Chairman will meet monthly for the purpose of considering Appeals against penalties and suspensions imposed in respect of Minor and Major Offences. The Appeals Committee in considering Appeals will have full powers to confirm, reduce, withdraw or increase the penalties and suspensions imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.

(ii) In the event of an Appeal being lodged against the imposition of a suspension or penalty in respect of a minor or major offence, the suspension or penalty will not be applied until the appeal has been heard. If no appeal is lodged the suspension or penalty will be applied from the date of the man's next settling. Appeals against the imposition of suspensions or penalties in respect of minor and major offences must be lodged by no later than 5 p.m. on the next settling day following upon the intimation of the suspension or penalty or within seven days of the receipt of same, whichever is the later.

2. Continuity of Minor and Major Offences

All penalties for minor and major offences imposed within a Contract period, if not expired, will continue into the subsequent Contract period.

3. Disciplinary Procedure for Men not on Contract

Men not on Contract who commit offences against Discipline will be dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee in accordance with past practice and any Appeals by non-contracted men will be dealt with by the Appeals Committee.

TRANSPORT & GENERAL WORKERS UNION7/146 Fishermens BranchTO ALL MEMBERS

Dear Sir and Brother,

We write to advise you of the latest development with regard to your terms and conditions of employment effective as and from 1st November, 1976.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE1. Offences resulting in no further employment being granted

Fishermen committing any of the following offences will be prevented from obtaining employment until their case is heard by the Disciplinary Committee, and will continue to be prevented from sailing, if they lodge an appeal, until the appeal is heard:

- (a) Mutiny or Sabotage.
- (b) Assault within the confines of the Industry.
- (c) Refusing duty.
- (d) Reporting under the influence of alcohol.
- (e) Impeding the sailing of vessels.
- (f) Convicted theft within the confines of the Industry.
- (g) Refusing to sail.
- (h) Failing to sail.
- (i) Failing to join.
- (j) Taking, or attempting to take wines and spirits aboard vessels.

We would advise any Fishermen committing any of the above offences to attend the Disciplinary Meetings personally to state their case. If found "Guilty," there is still the right to appeal, but again, no employment will be granted until after the appeal is heard.

2. Appeals

We also advise that the Appeals Committee will sit twice per month instead of the usual once.

3. Compensation for Unfounded Reports

Any Fishermen prevented from sailing and whose case is upheld by the Disciplinary Committee, or the Appeals Committee, will receive compensation from the Office submitting the unfounded report. The compensation will be at basic sea rates, plus poundage, based on the actual return of the vessel on which he was prevented from sailing. This will be divided into a daily rate, up to the date alternative employment is offered.

We also advise that any Skipper or Mate found taking wines or spirits aboard his vessel will also be disciplined in the same manner as any other member of the crew.

Yours fraternally,

A. Shepherd Liaison Officer

J. Allan Chairman

Settlement Sheet for an
Aberdeen Second Engineer.
dated 27th December, 1979.

Settlement Sheet for an
Aberdeen Second Engineer,
dated 27th December, 1979.

THOMAS DAVIDSON (TRAWLERS) LTD.

M.V. KINELLAN Date

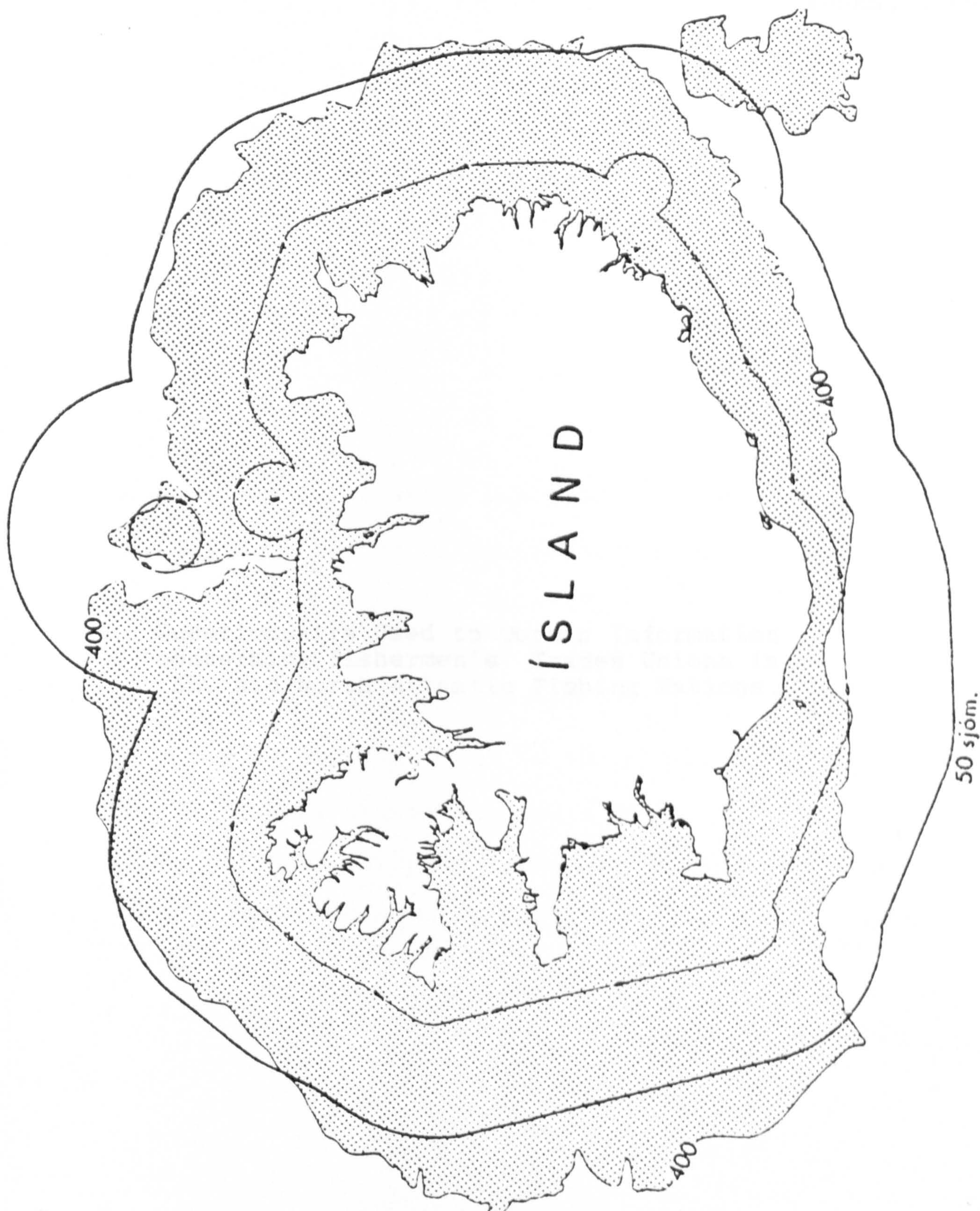
Name J. WARMAN ;

Rating 2nd Engineer

Holiday Pay and Wages Days	14		
Shore Wages Days			
Poundage			
Roes, Dabs, Dogs			
Landing Pay			
Gross Wages			611.85
Less Income Tax	118.15		
T.G.W.U.	1.75		
Advances			
National Ins.	34.55		
Prov. Society	1.08		
P.A.I.	1.08		
Bond	13.82		
Savings	36.36		
Gear <u>1CE</u> <u>CREAM</u>	80		
Scot. Pension	3.74		
			217.13
Tax Refund			
NETT WAGES		£	394.32

Map of Iceland showing the 400 metres
Isobar, the existing Twelve Mile Fishery
Limit, and a Fifty Mile Limit.

Map of Iceland showing the 400 metres
Isobar, the existing Twelve Mile Fishery
Limit, and a Fifty Mile Limit.



Source: Fishery Jurisdiction in Iceland, Icelandic Government, Reykjavik, Iceland, July, 1971, p.27.

a An isobar is a line on a map which connects places of equal atmospheric pressure.

Questionnaire Used to Obtain Information
concerning Fishermen's Trades Unions in
EEC and North Atlantic Fishing Nations.

The questionnaire which was administered to trade union officials representing trawler crews in Belgium, Faroe Islands, France, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Holland, Italy, Norway and Spain, elicited the information that the majority of fishermen in these countries are casual workers who are represented by small trade unions. Most of these trade unions were established in the early years of the twentieth century.



673.

Department of Business
Organisation

Heriot-Watt University

31-35 Grassmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2HT
Telephone 031-225 8432

Head of Department
Professor Leslie W Rodger

your ref

our ref

date

Monsieur,

Je me propose actuellement d'écrire un rapport sur l'histoire du syndicalisme dans l'industrie de la pêche en Grande-Bretagne. Pour mener à bien ce projet, j'ai besoin de rassembler des renseignements sur le syndicalisme dans l'industrie de la pêche dans les autres pays de la CEE ainsi que dans les pays qui pêchent dans l'Atlantique Nord.

Je vous serais reconnaissant des renseignements que vous pourrez me faire parvenir. Je vous remercie d'avance de votre coopération et vous prie d'accepter l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

N.A. Godman

QUESTIONNAIRE SUR LE SYNDICALISME DANS L'INDUSTRIE DE LA
PÊCHE EN EUROPE

1. En quelle année votre syndicat s'est-il créé? 1911
2. Quel est le nom complet de votre syndicat? CHRISTIAN TRANSP. WORKERS.
3. Actuellement, combien de pêcheurs (approximativement) sont-ils membres de votre syndicat?
± 500
4. Combien de pêcheurs appartenait à votre syndicat il y a 20 ans? ± 1000
5. Représentez-vous les hommes de pont, les mécaniciens, les capitaines et/ou ceux qui ont une participation financière à la propriété du ou des bateaux de pêche?

Capitaines	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">oui</div>	non
Hommes de pont	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">oui</div>	non
Mécaniciens	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">oui</div>	non
Ceux qui ont une participation financière	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">oui</div>	non

6. Approximativement, combien de vos membres reçoivent un salaire (hebdomadaire ou mensuel) en même temps qu'une part de la pêche?
7. Approximativement, combien de vos membres ne reçoivent que leur part de la pêche (pas de salaire hebdomadaire ou mensuel)?

Tous. à la part
% sur les ventes.

8. Lorsque votre syndicat (la section "pêcheurs") s'est créé, était-ce à cause
a) de l'introduction de chalutiers à vapeur ou b) de changements de
propriétaire des bateaux ou c) les deux?

a) *oui*

b)

*non*c) *non*

9. Lorsque votre syndicat a débuté, les hommes de pont participaient-ils plus
aux activités syndicales que, disons, les mécaniciens ou les capitaines?

mécaniciens

oui

~~non~~

hommes de pont

oui

~~non~~

capitaines

~~oui~~

non

10. Quel est le pourcentage approximatif des membres de votre syndicat employés
a) sur des bateaux de pêche appartenant à des compagnies de chalutiers,
b) sur des bateaux appartenant à des coopératives de producteurs, ou c) sur
des bateaux appartenant (entièrement ou en partie) au capitaine?

Compagnies de chalutiers

Coopératives de producteurs

Capitaines propriétaires — *10%**armateurs propriétaires 90%*Autres renseignements:

Merci de votre aide.

Norma A. Godman

N.A. Godman



676.

Department of Business
Organisation

Heriot-Watt University

31-35 Grassmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2HT
Telephone 031-225 8432

Head of Department
Professor Leslie W Rodger

your ref

our ref

date

Dear Sir,

At this moment, I am attempting to write an account of the history of trade unionism in the British fishing industry. To assist me in this project, I need to gather some information concerning trade unionism in the fishing industries of other EEC nations and North Atlantic fishing nations.

I would be grateful to you for any help that you can give to me. In anticipation of your co-operation I would now therefore thank you for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

N.A. Godman.



677.

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QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING TRADES UNIONISM IN THE FISHING INDUSTRIES
OF EUROPE

1. In which year was your trade union formed?
2. What is the full title of your trade union?
3. At this moment, approximately how many fishermen are members of your trade union?
4. How many fishermen were members twenty years ago?
5. Do you represent deck-crews, engineers, skippers and/or those who have a capital (financial) investment in the ownership of a fishing vessel or vessels?

Skippers	Yes	No
Deck-crews	Yes	No
Engineers	Yes	No
Above with a financial share of the vessel	Yes	No

- a)

b)

c)

9. In the early history of your trade union, were the deck-crews more closely involved in trade union activities than say the engineers or skippers?

Engineers	Yes	No
Deck-crews	Yes	No
Skipper	Yes	No

10. Approximately, what percentage of your fishermen-membership is employed on a) fishing vessels owned by trawler companies, b) vessels owned by producer-co-operatives or c) vessels owned, or partially owned, by the skipper?

30

Trawler companies
Producer-co-operatives
Skipper-owners

Any other comments

Thank you for your assistance.

N.A. Goldman

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